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SERIES



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IGHTY STRANGE

ES A. DUNCAN



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IT'S MIGHTY STRANGE, *or*
THE OLDER, THE NEWER

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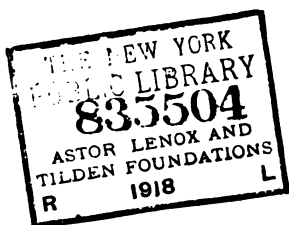
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It's Mighty Strange
or
"The Older, The Newer"

By **JAMES A. DUNCAN,**



1918
THE STRATFORD COMPANY
BOSTON



Copyright, 1918
The STRATFORD CO., Publishers
Boston, Mass.

The Alpine Press, Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

NOV 1918
JUN 1918
JUN 1918

THE AUTHOR HUMBLY DEDICATES
HIS WORK TO

Good Saint Anne de Beaupre

IN THANKSGIVING FOR THE MANY
FAVORS RECEIVED FROM HER
IN THE SUMMER OF NINE-
TEEN HUNDRED AND
SEVENTEEN



Introductory

EVER in ceaseless activity there circle about us on this tiny planet living, unseen beings, each one of whom is deeply and earnestly interested in the spiritual and temporal welfare of the children of men. To these the nations; to those the states; to another a community; for families and for individual souls some Guardian Angel has his duty, committed to him by Him Who wills that all men shall be saved.

They watch the times, and the spirit that is in men, knowing well how to caution, how to guard, how to strengthen, and how to fulfill every office to which their commands compel them. Nearer than all the rest of the Angelic Host by reason of his appointment, we love to think that the Guardian Angel comes to us and loves our ransomed race. From birth he attends to our soul. Through life he guides, enlightens, rules and guards it. It is he that is constantly suggesting devout and good thoughts, furthering good deeds and words. It is he who fights the evil spirit who has coiled his snaky folds around the human heart, and strives therewith to drag him to his lair. It is a long and unrelenting warfare, beginning at the cradle and ending only in the grave. Nor is there rest until the soul has escaped from the torment of the flesh to stand naked before the judgment seat of God.



INTRODUCTORY

You, who read this story of the angels and their blessed work, I would have to learn a lesson of devotion to your Guardian Angel, that you may love him with all the heart you have.

* * * * *

Amid a cluster of pines on one of old New England's most charming hills, which looks across the black-ribboned and verdure-clad dale to the sister hills beyond, there was gathered together one Christmas Eve a little company of Angels, met to celebrate together the Nativity of God made Man.

It was midnight, — the holy hour; and as they joined in chanting the "*Gloria in excelsis Deo*" each one of them remembered the chorus when it first sounded on another midnight, under other skies, in the ears of a few poor, timid shepherds. With folded wings and heads bowed low in adoration they saw once again the sacred vision of their Queen and her Child of Grace pass by and bless them. For angels too, on Christmas Eve, shall implore the benediction of the Prince of Peace. And as they passed, scattering with lavish hand their bounties upon angels, men, and all creation, there fell upon the face of one bright spirit in that glorious host a glance from the face of Him Who came into the world to suffer and be slain for sinful man.

How much there is in one look expressed, we mortals know full well. But when the Spirit of the Living



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God deigns to cast His perfect glance upon a spirit, or a soul that is sanctified, there comes between them a bond of union so complete that each in his own measure knows and understands the other's thoughts.

* * * * *

Then spoke that angel to his fellows :

“Behold, the Holy Infant, as He passed, gazed on me with a meaning I have never known before. I am the guardian of an infant maiden, born but now in yonder house. And He has told to me as He did to Ananias of the great Apostle that she is a chosen vessel unto Him ; and in her way under His guidance she shall bear His name to many of His children round about. You, therefore, angels of this region, and guardians of her family, who have at heart the interest of these poor folk who are sunk in ignorance of the truths of Christ, I beg you to assist me with your utmost endeavors to bring about the happy consummation of His will.”

Not one dissented, nor failed to promise his aid and help to that bright spirit who implored it. Then up to heaven once more there rose the Hymn of Praise to Jesus, Mary and Joseph. So singing they dispersed. Then amid the snow-clad branches of the pines, — had you the ears of your soul unstopped, — you might have listened, all entranced with joy, to the lingering echoes of : *Peace on earth to men of good will.*

At the mother's breast the baby woke and cried



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for very joy, as to its little infant eyes the angel showed the scenes of heavenly beauty that it might see in after ages, when a long life of pain and suffering should be spent. How wise that look that comes at times into tiny baby eyes! They seem to see, — before the sights of earth have blinded them, — the very things of heaven.

So then the angel on that Christmas day began the wondrous work entrusted to his charge. To labor without rest, untired and fervent, day and night, in every holy way to keep that child, to save its soul and bring it safely home to God in after years. And to the great Queen of Angels I offer this, a work of love, begging her to assist me in my work, and bless it with the benediction of her Son. Here then I lay it at her feet, in the arms of Holy Church, whose Patroness she is.

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CHAPTER I

The Old Home

IT was a clear and cold winter, and the snow was deep where the "giants of the wood" fell before the axe of the settlers two hundred years now gone. Home they dragged them in the smooth snow, and the sides of the patient oxen smoked with the exertion. Then they squared with the adze and the axe those mighty logs, and raised by the brawny arms of half a hundred sturdy sons of men of Britain, volunteer exiles from the land that gave them birth, or else their wiry sons. In the soft and pleasant days of May they finished the house sufficiently, and moved into it from the rough log cabin, now to be used for the housing of their cattle. In this house had lived and died six generations of men and women. They led a life as pious as they knew how to lead it; they prayed; they worshipped God, as they thought, perfectly, and there they had lived and died under the shelter of that place, longing for the one thing: "That they knew how to lead it; they prayed; they might make them free."



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Descendants of generations of pious ancestors who held and fought for the Faith, — the fathers of these poor people, — had been robbed of the heritage of their belief by the malice of two unscrupulous and ambitious English Sovereigns. But they brought with them to New England many of the customs and practices which had come down to them from the Age of Faith.

Still, as in the days of Alfred, St. Edward the Confessor, and that glorious martyr, St. Thomas a Beckett, they studied and read from the Book of books. They still baptized their young and celebrated the "Feast of the Lord's Supper," as they love to call it with a reverence and piety that astonished us when we recall it as it was in our own young days. What though they groped in the dark? If we could hear the voice of their Guardians telling all they know, we should hear the news that, in the dark, multitudes came to find that blessed door that opens into the palace of light.

Oh! What a glorious old house! Its low-ceiled rooms; the great beams starting out from every corner and crossing the ceilings. Its ample fireplaces with their cunningly carved mantles, and the wainscots that came from England, to

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charm the eye and delight the heart with their art and beauty. The shady "peazza," as they called it, with the grand old climbing rose on one side and the trumpet vine on the other. The door, with its quaint brass knocker, opening into the spacious hall that ran all the length of the house and which had room for a finely-turned staircase with its tall, London-made clock on the landing half way up. What a cosy corner there on a drowsy afternoon, to place the old rocker in, and have half-a-dozen cat-naps when dinner was over, the dishes washed up, and the work finished for the time! Then, waking, we ascended to the great hall above, with its settees, its chests of drawers, and pictures hung against the walls, of old ancestors in black cloaks and white ruffles, in once brightly gilt frames, now tarnished and much the worse for wear.

There were the bed chambers, as old as ever in their curious furnishings that told of conscience in the household. For it is conscience that, added to obedience, keeps the house in order and the family as well. When generation after generation of men and women go about their daily duties for conscience' sake, — ay, and have a sort of fierce feeling in the soul, of hatred for

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anyone or anything that comes to interfere with that tireless monitor, — we may cease to wonder that such characters as these we are undertaking to study in some of their wanderings in this world of care should exist in a state of society where the ordinary channels of God's Holy Help have long since run dry.

Conscience is the safety, not alone of the individual and the family, but also of the state. The place for its training and development is in the family under the sacred tutelage of Father and Mother, with all the aids that Holy Church supplies. In the generation that preceded the history related in these pages, conscience ruled the heart to an extent which was often fanatical, and which in spite of that produced men of character, whose highly developed natural virtues may put to the blush many who have been more highly favored with opportunities than they.

Let conscience enter into your daily life and affect all you do; look upon all you have, both temporal and spiritual, as gifts from a good and kind Creator, and recall frequently to mind that you will have to give a strict account of all those gifts, — and then look to see if your affairs will prosper or not.



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Put aside your little petty schemes inspired only by motives of self-interest, and work for your own good because you love God above all things and your neighbor as yourself.

You who loot the public treasury, who turn aside justice out of the way, who oppress the orphan and the widow, deafening the voice of conscience daily as you walk in the wicked paths which the nefarious business which you have chosen points out to you; you, who for lust of power, and desire and love of office and place, welcome the sight of men and women cringing at your feet; you, who love these things, — listen! harken! It is the voice of your conscience, and it calls to you in tones so loud that you cannot help hearing it: “Do right and be in the right, because it is right, and because you desire the reward that comes from right doing, and because you have a wholesome fear of the punishment that follows swiftly upon the heels of the evil-doer.”

This is the voice which those who lived in this house we are engaged in examining heard ringing in their ears, and they hastened to obey it as the voice of God.

Have you ever climbed into one of those great beds, vast enough for a small army of children,



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replete with heavy, home-made linen sheets, whose clean white folds are fragrant with the odor of the lavender which in full flower the housewife gathered in the fields? Not unless you are an old man or woman. Down you sink into the soft bed of feathers, the pillows invite you with a drowsy embrace, and when you awake in the morning you are refreshed and as wide awake as if new life had been infused into you. The sun is shining in at the east window, and you dress in a hurry to escape downstairs.

You leave the closets filled with beautiful handiwork of more than half a dozen bygone generations, and most of it still in use. No mill ever made such towels as that you used this morning. That young woman, a century and a half ago, raised the flax, spun the yarn and wove the work of art you just used. Her heart is in that work and it speaks to you as if she herself were bidding you take example by her. But this is not time for sentiment. There is a sound of hammering going on downstairs, and the grinding of the coffee-mill reminds you that soon there will be the call, and you must take your place at an old-fashioned New England breakfast table. And when it is served at last, the ham and eggs in the old pewter platter, loaves



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of bread, hot Johnny-cake, and coffee good and strong, well creamed and sweetened, you say within yourself: "Why is it that things are so good here?"

The answer must be, because everything is done in a conscientious manner. But, hold a moment! Breakfast is indeed over, and yet we must not go to work until the day and its duties have been given to God. Some child from among the older ones reads from Bible a few verses; and then on bended knees the father of the family, or in his absence the mother, recommends to God the household, the house, the farm, all they have, not forgetting last to ask for Salvation at the end of life. Then, when he has thanked God for all His favors, and praised Him for all the blessings of life, they all rise and go forth until the evening to whatever duty God has laid upon them.

It was a good family that lived in that house where we are to dwell as ghosts for a while, a conscientious family, who never did a work without referring it to their God. There had been six children born to Mr. Lincoln by his wife: "She that was Jane Tappan," as the neighbors called her. Two of them were boys who were killed in the war of 1861, and one was

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a wanderer somewhere. He went also to the war with his brothers, but he disappeared, and he had not been heard from. There was a little girl also at the time that Clarissa was born whom they called Mary, slight and delicate from babyhood; but she went away in early girl-life to the other side of that veil that divides us from the dead, and Clarissa and Sally were all who were left.

No iron implements lay out in the snow all winter on that farm, to be found all dilapidated in the spring when they were badly needed. No frozen fowls fell off the roosts because "it was too cold to house them right." The yards were kept clean and sweet, and so were the paths about them; an abundance of slaked lime was one of the standing orders on that well-managed farm. There was gilt-edged butter; there were clean white eggs; there were fine fat porkers, and an abundance of good fresh vegetables for sale in their season. "The Massachusetts Ploughman" and "The Old Farmer's Almanac" were always in evidence on the shelf in the kitchen. The pickles and preserves put up by the female portion of the family found a ready sale in the Boston markets, and gave a handsome return for the labor expended on them.

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The cash receipts went into the bank, but minus a goodly portion for the poor, and for "The Missionaries," — and helped to swell the little fortune that Mr. Lincoln left behind him at his death.

Seldom did they need anything in the kitchen besides the few groceries, — "they lived off the farm." Nor would they have sold for a fortune one piece of the old-fashioned furniture. The china that was put on their table was certainly antique enough, but no money could buy it. There had come a dealer in antiques, drawn hither by the reports of all that the old house contained, and Clarissa never forgot the end of that unlucky night's little visit.

"I hear," said he to Mr. Lincoln, "you've got a house full of old-fashioned furniture."

"Well, what of it?" inquired the old Yankee.

"I should like to see some of it, if you would show it to me," replied the dealer.

"Well, you're asetin' on some of it naow," he answered.

"Yes; but clocks, chests of drawers, old mahogany beds, — you have some of these things, have you not?"

" 'Twould be a curious kind of a house without a clock, a chest, or a bed."

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"Could I see some of them?"

"Yes. If you look behind you there is a clock." And there was an old eight-day wooden clock that had not run for ten years.

"I came here to see your old furniture, Mr. Lincoln," again explained the exasperated dealer. He seemed to think that he had some clown of no fine sensibilities to deal with, because forsooth he had hard furrowed hands and a grizzly beard.

"O you did, hey? Well, who sent you?" queried Clarissa's father.

"No one sent me. I came of my own notion. I thought you might be in need of ready money, and would like to sell some of your things," he ventured, and rather slowly, too, as he thought. Mr. Lincoln heard him out, and then rose to his full height, some six foot three:

"Young man, I don't know who you be, and I don't know as I care much. But you get right out into the hall, and out of the door, and daown the walk to the road as fast as you can. I am going to the barn after a horsewhip and the bull dog. And if you are anywhere in sight by the time I get back, I will lend you a little ready money to get your clothes patched after Towser

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gets through with you. Noaw, good bye, young man! Be spry!"

Old things like these represent to some men the holy memories of days gone by, of persons long gone to their reward and peaceful rest in the quiet, shady church yard. They are to them even as are the relics and images of the Saints to Catholics. They love them for those of whom they speak to them; but to sell them, — that would be nothing short of sacrilege.

Clarissa watched the man from the window of her room and wondered at the time what it was that made him hasten his footsteps so. But when at the supper table her father told the assembled family what had happened, and when she supplemented it with her lively description of the dealer's hurried flight, every one laughed and enjoyed it all as a good joke, though the idea of the sale was repugnant to each.

There were other farms in the neighborhood that were mortgaged and whose owners had sold many precious pieces of old china and furniture, and in some cases their farms had been sold over their heads to pay off the indebtedness to those who held the mortgages. But not an acre of land on the Lincoln estate was burdened with debt, or any sort of a lien upon it. Thus it is,



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and thus it shall be throughout the world, where conscience reigns supreme. Then shall good angels dwell in the house, lovingly to go to and fro with all of those who make up this conscience-loving family. How tenderly they will watch and guard, and pray for each duty-bound conscientious soul, hoping to present it as pure as God made it to Him at last!

Our dear old home! We love it still, and all that it contains, for the lessons of goodness and truth and beauty that there we learned, and for the examples of the same that were shown in the pious, good lives of our ancestors, who lived and died there for many generations now long gone.

Happy days of our old home! You are gone, and we are far away, and life draws swiftly to its closing. Oh, some day in a future life, may it be ours to renew the holy memories now enshrined in our hearts and in that dear old home. May it be ours to go over again the life, its acts, and all the motives for them, directed by a tender and good conscience. So shall we praise the God Who put into us this conscience, gave us the good will to follow it, and set our path around with His holy angels, to help us in life and in death.

Dear old home! Consecrated as a sacred shrine within our hearts by the memories of a



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kind father, a tender mother, a helpful aunt, and those brothers and sisters who were so true to us in every time when we had need of help from them. Though years, and seas, and continents have separated us from the old home on the hillside, we venerate it still; and as the pilgrim turns his steps towards the Holy City to worship there at the shrine of the Holy Apostles, so we this Christmas night have set our hearts towards the place where we have passed in youth the happiest days of life; the days of joyous innocence which are gone and shall never live again, except as to-night in sacred memory's chambers, where none can do them violence.

The home for us has gone, has passed, and we may never see it again. We are old, and have made a home perhaps for a new generation in a new land. If so, God be thanked. There is no influence like that of home to mold and shape the life of youth; and its lessons are, of all those taught to man, the ones least likely to be forgotten.

In adversity we call to mind how our own parents did in the very same case, and we take courage, remembering the example of fortitude they set for us.

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In doubt and perplexity we call to mind their prudence, and profit by it to practice the same virtue. If luxury in any form may try to seduce us with its insidious charms, we can still recall the modesty and temperance which marked the whole household where we were reared.

And when in daily life, a thousand things arise to vex and plague us, the uprightness and justice in the equal treatment of all their neighbors by our father and mother is an example better than a hundred sermons, or half a hundred treatises on the same subjects.

“Home!” It is a sacred word, a prophetic word, that has no fulfillment here. It is but the echo of the word pronounced upon the shores of the ocean of Eternity, on whose waters we are sailing for an everlasting haven.

“Home!” It is not here; the homes of earth are only shadows of an eternal and perpetual Home, whose mansions never shall grow old nor fade, and whose blessed inhabitants shall be our joyous company forever.

O thrice blessed Home! where parting is unknown, and grief can never come; may my tired eyes behold thy blessed mansions, which a loving Father hath prepared for those that love Him.

CHAPTER II

The Unfolding of the Flower

IF the reader expects this is going to be a story of love and human passion, he will be disappointed. But, do not throw the book down; for we shall consider love in this romance as something supernatural and divine, — a gift outside of the natural gifts of man.

We can understand how on the evening on which Clarissa was born the angels sang joyously; for they felt in their hearts that here should be the soul of a "valiant woman," like her described in the proverbs of Solomon.

The little mite of humanity lay in the old cradle made of one huge log, hollowed out many years before, during some of the long New England evenings, "after the day's work was over." For these people had not yet learned that "work is a degrading necessity," and that the true idea of life is to "do as little of it as possible."

There she lay, little Clarissa Lincoln, her mother's last child, like a bundle of clothes, with a pink face and two tiny fists, doubled up as if even in the cradle she would begin that



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fight with the world and sin which she was destined to engage in later on.

She opened her eyes and her mouth and cooed and crowed, as if what she could now see of the world was as pleasant a vision as one could desire to see. Her mother took her to her bosom, as all good mothers do. "Modern Civilization" had not substituted "Art" for Nature, or if it had, Mrs. Lincoln quietly ignored the fact, maintaining the "old-fashioned" idea that Nature is superior to Art.

What can take the place of a good mother? Nothing. And this had Clarissa, — a mother who was the "salt of the earth," as her husband used to say.

A quiet but determined woman, with wonderful tact and patience with the vagaries of her children. Deeply religious, she had always desired that one of her boys should serve God in the ministry; and when she was with child with the last, she one day knelt down as did the mother of Samuel, and dedicated the latest fruit of her womb to the service of God. No wonder now that angels were rejoicing, while the poor mother felt that her offering had been rejected.

The months passed away into early summer, in the time of Blessed Mary's month, when all



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the earth is in festive bloom to welcome its queen. But while no thoughts of Mary were in their hearts, they thought of Mary's Son, and on a bright May Sunday afternoon, they brought the child "to present it to the Lord in Baptism."

There on the table before the pulpit nestled the old silver bowl, flanked by two fine towels and filled with water from the well; and there the venerable minister, white with the age of eighty years, did with trembling hands pour on the head of our little heroine the healing waters which Christ has commanded to pour on all. The angels sang once more with joy; for there was now a soul redeemed, a member of Christ's Church, an heir to heaven. For Baptism, to him who gave it to Clarissa, meant all it means to a Catholic, and was administered with care.

Then home they went again, and every one had to see the baby and comment on its eyes and nose and mouth; to tell if it was like its father or its mother or was a composite of both. And they were proud of their children, all that God had given them, "only six," they said, wishing they had as many more. And now began her training.



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Mrs. Copley, coming in one afternoon to call, was saying:

"I have the crossdest babies you ever did see; how is it that yours never cry like mine?"

"Because I do not indulge them, I suppose," she replied.

"Why, I do not indulge my babies. How can one?"

"By running to them every time they call, and petting them all the time, and giving them attention when they ought to be amusing themselves. If my baby wakes up, she knows I will come after a while, and so she waits. When she first cried for me, I let her cry it out. It seems hard, but you only have to do it once or twice, and they will not trouble you by being cross."

"Well I never! Who would ever think of such things?" she asked.

"My mother used to do the same with me," said Mrs. Lincoln.

"And of course you remember all about it," laughed Mrs. Copley.

"Ha, ha, ha! No. But she often told me, and I saw it tried with some of my younger sisters and brothers, and never forgot it."

"Did your mother use to whip you much?" Mrs. Copley continued.



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“Well no, not so much. Her face was awful to me when I had done wrong. I remember but one or two severe punishments. She did not spare the rod when she had to use it; but that was seldom, and I believe she herself was the real reason; we loved her too much to do anything she forbade us to do.”

“Well, Mrs. Lincoln, if you bring your children up in this way you’ll have a family of saints. I wish I had been brought up so,” replied Mrs. Copley.

“Try to bring your children up in the fear of the Lord, and you won’t go far astray,” answered Mrs. Lincoln, and Mrs. Copley rose to go, shaking her finger at the happy little baby Clarissa, who was amusing herself with a spool on the floor, demanding attention from no one.

How fast the days fly! And children learn to understand, and then to speak. When she was three she could say the Lord’s Prayer perfectly, not in baby language but in intelligible English, and also the little child’s prayer, “Now I lay me down to sleep.” These two she repeated every night before going to rest, first at her mother’s knee and later by herself, when she became a “little woman” and could “do for herself,” as they called it. The uncongenial task of learning

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texts was made an easy one by the habit Mr. Lincoln had of speaking in Scriptural language to her children. The Bible became to the little child of five years a storehouse of stories, and she never tired of learning them. To her childish mind the tales of the Creation and the Fall; Abraham and the angels; the Deluge, and hundreds of other such tales were as pleasant and attractive as fairy tales are to the minds of children now-a-days. And so her imaginings even as a young child were of the affairs of God and of heaven, and not of fantastic nothingness.

There was little if any of the harsh Calvinism of some people of the day about the Lincolns, and God was always shown to be the perfection of love to all His creatures on earth.

These lessons of the love of God were emphasized by the teaching which came to her every Sunday afternoon in the mother's room, after the four-o'clock dinner. It was then that they were gathered, both boys and girls, all the year round to pray and sing; and having recited the lessons from the Shorter Catechism in the "New England Primer," to listen to a quarter of an hour's talk from a mother who delighted to be in the place of God to her children. Hers was a position that the genuine New England mother

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felt deeply, and acted upon also; she knew that children are God's gifts.

"Like as the arrows in the hand of a strong man, even so are the young children. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; he shall not be ashamed when he speaks with his enemies in the gate."

And so felt this grand woman towards her children, that as they were "lent to her from the Lord," she must be able to give them up to him at any time, and train them in the way that He wills that they should go.

Mild and sweet were the words of her teaching, but powerful and earnest also; and so down into the heart of little Clarissa went the story of the Crucifixion. She seemed to be ever at the foot of the Cross, and was never tired of contemplating it. She would trace crosses in the sand, and arrange pebbles in the same shape. Sometimes she would wish that she could have stood at the foot of the Cross, with the Mother of Jesus, — and then she thought:

"What a blessed thing it must have been for Mary to be there when her Son died for the sins of the world! How did *she* act then? Did she offer Him up as He offered Himself? And the reply to the thought came to her: 'Yes, surely;



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how could she do otherwise, since she loved her Son?' "

And it was then that her Guardian Angel put within her soul a love for the Mother of Divine Grace which never left her all her life. She could never bear to hear a word against the Divine Mother after that, and any words of the kind would cut her to the heart.

"The one who loves Mary cannot go astray finally," so we are told; and it was Mary's love that led our little heroine in the way to the end of her days. This she learned in that Home Sunday School, which has been for many the salvation of their souls in after life.

Mrs. Lincoln seldom had to punish her children; but when she did, it was done in such a way that the experiment never had to be repeated. Two of her boys who were killed in the Civil War might have testified to something like the following:

"James, — have you been teasing old Mrs. Connors again? You remember what I told you about that?"

"But, mother,—I forgot, and all the boys- -, " he began.

"What all the boys do, that is wrong and forbidden by your mother, cannot be any excuse for

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you. You must learn to be man enough to act for yourself, and not to be drawn into sin by evil companions. Now, — are you guilty?"

"Yes, Mother," replied he, hanging his head.

"And so you shall be punished. Now go to the orchard and cut a little switch; trim off the twigs and place it in your bed, and be up in your room at half past seven."

At half past seven there went up to his room a suffering boy, and a mother whose heart knew sorrow because a son of hers had sinned. Then she gave him a little lecture and, turning him over on the bed, she applied the stick while the tears rained down her face. Ah! loving mother, to punish your child thus. Great was your faith in God and great your love for your children, His sons. May the peace of eternal rest be yours.

"Clarissa is a good girl. I never had to punish her," is the testimony that her mother bore to her character not long before she died. And can we wonder at it? Had she been nagged at and scolded and driven about like an obstinate animal; had she been struck for nothing at all and punished severely by an angry mother, — this story would not have been written. There was the Woodbury family, and they were

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brought up on the rod and hard words, — and look at them. Not one of them turned out well; there is not a church member among any of the children, and, of those who married and have families, none go to church any more today. "Families" did I say? They have a child or two apiece; "But we can't be bothered with large families; it is not the fashion to have them and modern civilization teaches us how to prevent it." Such are some of the results of a mistaken method of dealing with the young by their parents.

What the Holy Mass means to the young child who first begins to understand it, was the "Lord's Supper" to the young Protestant Clarissa. The solemnity was made much of, and for a long time she was not allowed to go to the Church when the Sacrament was administered. Her curiosity was aroused, and she often begged to be allowed to go on one of the four Sundays that came so seldom in the year. She had been at the "preparatory lecture" once, and came home filled with devotion, and anxious to go next Sunday to the Church.

And when at last she did go, and read beforehand in her Bible, the story of the Last Supper in the upper room at Jerusalem, her heart over-

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flowed and she wept softly all the time that the old minister simply, but with great solemnity, carried out the ceremonial of the Lord's Supper for his people.

It was not long after this that she came to her mother and told her that, "she had given her heart to God," and wanted to "join the Church." And as she stood alone that day before the Communion Table, in presence of all the people, clothed in her white dress, she was more like a pure novice coming forward to take the vows of virginity, than a "Puritan maiden joining the Church."

Do we not see every year, the pure white crocus blooming out in spite of the cold snow around it? And so God warmed many a heart with love for Him, in spite of the chilling and killing frosts of the cold Calvinistic doctrine which these poor souls professed.

And if her religion was not neglected, neither was her training in the things of the world. There was play-time every day, but there was work-time also, and her hands became as skillful as her mother's in all the things that it is becoming for a good and thrifty housewife to know. So that, when she was sixteen, her mother could say of her:

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"I do believe that, if the Lord were to take me now, Clarissa could keep house just as well as I can. I can trust her to do anything."

Such learning was acquired with none of the fuss and noise which some people are accustomed to employ when they are engaged in learning anything. Clarissa set her mind to see how her mother did things and imitated her exactly, often never asking any information. It is thus that good things come, the best of them noiselessly and with little of the grand and loud clamor of the world.

In person Clarissa was tall and straight, her features far from delicate though not coarsely fashioned, but with a homely ruggedness that had a beauty all its own. The horses and cattle knew her, and she was the friend of everyone. Even old Towser, the big white bulldog, would have laid down his life for her. She was ever strong and well and had a good, healthy appetite, though she was taught never to over-indulge it. She knew all the herbs of the fields, all the wild creatures and their habits; and her wanderings often brought her in contact with persons and things that in after life played a part not unimportant.

For, once, as she was seeking here and there

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some simple herb, she came upon a rough board cabin of those, to her strange, people who came from the land where soldiers rule, — though crime is well-nigh unknown, if we except the “crime” of Catholicity.

And here she met a simple but keen old Irish woman, who “loved the young slip of a girl, as soon as I laid my two eyes upon her.”

It was a shock to see a woman smoking a pipe, but Clarissa soon found that it is “not the outside that makes the man,” but what is within.

And more than once conversing with Old “Granny Egan,” she saw within her a soul most beautiful, and a love of God of which she knew nothing. Together they would talk, this old battered woman who went out with the stick, and the young lively girl who could ride any skittish horse, about the various ways in which God had shown His love. And Clarissa learned from her as she related her history, and told her how her ancestors had suffered for the Faith in Ireland, the lesson that suffering is necessary before happiness. But of the Faith for which she suffered she wisely told her naught.

And then Clarissa’s heart would open, and she would tell her all. How good her God had been to her, and how she loved Him; and how

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never a trouble had yet crossed her path. At which the old woman added:

“Ye’ll have them soon enough, God help ye.”

She was the first Catholic to whom Clarissa had ever spoken, and she was delighted and surprised to find how different she was from all that she had supposed a Catholic to be.

Her mother said laughingly to her when she told her all that had happened:

“Well Clarissa, go there when you please, you may do them some good; but don’t let them make a Roman Catholic out of you.”

“Ha, ha, ha,” she laughed, “the moon must fall first, mother.”

And yet the iron had entered into her soul and she knew it not. The first visit there was not the last to the Egans. And although they never talked again about religious matters, the Catholic Religion grew daily less terrible than it seemed, as painted to her in her childish days, the more she saw it reflected in the pious lives of those good people. And so the Angels took fresh hope and courage to work for Clarissa and to help to accomplish her destiny.

One night she had a strange dream. She thought that being much older than she was, she was dressed all in black with a tight fitting

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starched cap which covered all her head except her face. And she seemed to be in a house where she felt perfectly happy, but was under some restraint not to go out. She was taking care, so she thought, of old and needy people and they blessed her, Then she heard a bell ring which summoned her to pray; and Lo! there was a long line of women dressed like herself, walking and passing in at a certain door, one by one. And when she would have gone in with the rest, the door closed softly, and a voice said from within:

“Not now, but some day in the future.” When Clarissa woke from her dream her eyes were wet with tears. The memory of this she buried deep within her heart, until one day she told it to old Mrs. Egan, on whose wisdom she relied:

“The creature!” she said, as she blessed herself, “she dreamed she was a nun and she never knew it.” “Ah!” said she aloud, “you dreamed of the nuns, my dear; where did you ever know them?”

“Nowhere. I do not know anything about them, do you?”

“Oh, then is it the likes of me has to tell the likes of you? If my daughter Nano was here,

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she could tell you all about them, for sure she is one of them."

"What, Mrs Egan," said Clarissa, "have you a daughter a nun? Where is she? Do you ever see her? Tell me all about it, do."

"I'm thinking it's your mother wouldn't be thanking me for putting Catholic notions into your head," replied the prudent old lady; "but as ye are so anxious to hear all about them, I might as well tell you the truth, for God knows anyone else might tell ye all the lies in the world about them, if ye asked them what nuns are and what they do be at."

"Oh," laughed Clarissa gaily, "you cannot put any Catholic notions into my head, I am too good a Protestant for that."

"May the Lord love ye, my dear, but its a nun and a Catholic ye ought to be," said the old lady fervently.

"Why, Mrs. Egan, how can you? Come, do tell me all about your daughter the nun," implored the eager girl. And so on that Autumn afternoon the old exile from Ireland told to her friend all the fond secrets of a mother's heart.

"She was the lightest and brightest of all the fifteen that God had sent to me. She had the cheeriest laugh and happiest face of them all,



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though they were all good children. She could say her beads with the best of them when she was scarcely three years old, and was always as ready to pray as she was to be off among the hills chasing the sheep, or at any other young pranks.

“When she was old enough she went to school with the rest; and she would come home, and you would think she would never be done with her stories. She could mimic anyone you ever saw, from the old woman who kept the inn at the village to the priest’s housekeeper, who was as cross as two sticks. The good God forgive me for telling ye. She had all the Sisters in the school could give her and was ready to be a good help to me, after the rest left me for America or heaven, — when one day she comes in to me with the tears streaming down her face.

“Nano Allana!” says I to her. ‘What’s the matter with ye at all? Sure, child, you’re crying.’

“ ‘But I’m crying for you, Mother, dear,’ she says to me. ‘You’ll have to go out with Johnnie alone when he comes to fetch you away.’ You see, Johnnie, — he’s the boy I’m living with. And he made up his mind to go to America, and we two was a-goin’ with him. So says I:

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“ ‘And whatever are you a-going to do, that you tell me you are not going with us? Tell me, dear, what it is, and don't be crying like that, unless you want to break my heart entirely.’ And then she told me that how from the first day she saw the Sisters she wanted to be one of them. And could I bear to part with her? But I bowed down my head, so I did, to the Father of us all, and I cried to Him and I said: ‘You can have what is your own of all You gave me. They are all Yours, every one.’ And though I knew it was hard, yet it was a great pleasure to me to know that one of my own would be in a holy house of prayer all the time. Then my dear daughter caught me and kissed me and said:

“ ‘Mother, you make me so happy,’ and we were happy together. So the day I left for the big ship, she left too, to be a Nun, and I'll see her again some day, but not here.”

After a long pause the old lady said to Clarissa:

“And you want to know what she is doing? She lives in a big house and takes care of a lot of God's poor and works all day for them and prays for them and for her dear old mother, away off in America. She is one of God's daughters now, so she is, but I shall claim her as



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mine some day," said Mrs. Egan with a smile of joy.

When Clarissa came home that night she was more than ever thoughtful, but no one spoke to her about it, for of late it had not been an uncommon thing with her. But in the night there came to her in sleep what appeared to be a huge, black shadow like a hand, which shut out sight and hearing and all feeling, and seemed to leave her helpless and alone. When she awoke she was cold and feverish by turns and, on going down stairs, alarmed her mother by her appearance.

"I do believe you are going to be ill," said Mrs. Lincoln to her daughter. "So you better go up to bed again, and I'll give you some herb tea and send for the doctor." The doctor came and pronounced it typhoid. And so poor Clarissa went through all the horrors of her delirium and through the pains incidental to that dread disease. It was her first illness of any serious nature, and, thanks to her youth and vigorous constitution, she came well out of it. But she changed into a real woman and, thinking many thoughts within herself, was, during the time of her convalescence, wont to put them in this form:



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“It seems that I would like to give up all to serve God, and so I do. For here I promise Him to devote my life to Him whenever and wherever and however I can, as a single woman, to serve Him and His poor as long as I shall live.”

This was the change, and He to whom this offer was so frankly made accepted it, and bade His Angels be the more alert now that they had a devoted one to watch.

And as for the Angels; with what wonder must they have seen this Grace of God wrought so powerfully within her soul. Then Nano's Angel, and Mrs. Egan's, and Clarissa's, met together and entered into a league to help the soul of this young virgin with all the might they could.

But of these things no one of the three knew until afterwards, when they were declared unto them. So does God strive and work and help us by His Grace to bring us into all the love of His loving Kingdom.

CHAPTER III

Shadows

THE shadows of the old pines that lay upon the old home seemed heavier and darker than usual last night, and the old trees told to each other as they sighed in the light wind which rustled their boughs, how the time had come at last when some of them must die.

Long centuries had they stood, and they were no longer young when the Indians held their councils under their shelter. But like all things created they must have their time of decay and death, passing away to make room for others. Yes, Death had claimed one of the old pine trees, and was even now choosing among them new victims. What if they mourned? It is the law of their being; they must die.

"See, Father," said Clarissa, "the top of that pine; I believe it is dying."

"So it is," he replied, "and we must take it down, lest some gale come and it fall where it ought not and do damage."

And so six of them came, one after another, to fall before the axe of the woodsman. The



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mother cried to see them go, for it was like losing old friends, and called up the memory of two of her boys killed, and one missing and never heard from.

"It is easier to bear a trial that comes when we are prepared for it," some people will tell you. Perhaps. Those who have borne both, say that one is as hard a burden to bear as the other.

Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln had given to the country, their sons. They were all born in succeeding years, and at the breaking out of the Civil War in 1861, being nineteen, twenty, and twenty-one years of age respectively, they enlisted for three years in the Army.

James and Henry were both killed at Gettysburg, and Sam, who was there and wrote home an account of the battle, shortly after disappeared, and had never been heard of since. Only the mother's heart of all the rest at home cherished a fond feeling that her boy would return some time.

"Clarissa, we must make haste now, for Thanksgiving Day is coming along, and your turkeys must be all ready to be carried out on Wednesday morning. Now get them ready for the oven as usual; your sister and I will help you



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at odd moments, but if you are going to help the poor you will have to work a good deal of the time alone." So spoke Mrs. Lincoln to her daughter, who was going to give away some turkeys for a Thanksgiving dinner to a number of poor people, not forgetting the Egans, who lived in town.

Wednesday morning came, and Clarissa and her mother took the sleigh and horse, and went from house to house with the turkeys. On the way home they had to turn a dangerous corner, and there the Angel of Death met them. Mrs. Lincoln was thrown out and sustained a very serious fracture of her right hip.

Of all the persons who leave us for another world, and whose faces we must hide away from sight in the ground, there is none more dear than the loving mother who gave us birth. And though it is hard to lose one's children, one's husband or wife, yet there is a grief in the loss of a mother when death comes to claim her, that is unknown for anyone else. Without her what would we be? Where would we be? Did she not set our feet in the right path and guide us in it from the first? We can say nothing here of her love for us as shown in what mere nature told her to do; but we speak of that love



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stronger than death, the love that she has for us because she has given us to God, and has seen the day on which we also gave ourselves up to Him and consecrated our lives to His service. This bond of union is now to be broken by death, as far as we can see with our bodily eyes. For the Catholic it is not sundered; — the cord that binds the heart of the mother to her children,— but it is made stronger by the Communion of Saints.

In this article of faith we are taught that the souls of the faithful dead pray for us, and that we can also pray to them and for them. There is a veil only between us and them, but not a great wall of separation. They are near us close at hand to hear our prayers and present them to God; and also to benefit themselves by the prayers which we offer up to God for them.

We have the consolation of offering up prayers and alms and fastings for them, and we know that we can help them very much by these things. And so the pain of parting for a Catholic is more like the pain which he experiences when some dear one moves into a foreign country to return no more. We can still send and receive our messages, in the way which the Church approves, to and from all our faithful

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dead. Oh, hard indeed and cold exceedingly, — is the unbelief in this consoling truth! How can one bear up unless he has a heart of a Stoic, which is a heart of ice? He must, if he have any feelings in his soul which unbelief has not killed, be very miserable, until God in mercy relieves him of the acute pains of memory by turning his mind to other things.

But if he believes that the dead one is happy, and has no need of us, is it not strange to think that he forgets all about us? Does death, then, end the care of our dead ones for us? Do they cease to pray for us now because they are come into the presence of Him who hearkens to prayer?

Strange, and hardly to be believed, that such a change could have come over our dear ones even for a moment; and that they should thus practically forget us, who were in their thoughts day and night when they were on earth. If I believe in a future life at all, I must believe that as my dear mother was a good and faithful mother to me here, so she is still, in the glorious place where she is gone, — as I hope.

If I believe that her dear soul is immortal and is still living, how can I help believing that it remembers the child it loved so well on earth?

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“Can the mother forget the child she bore? Or the son, the mother who bore him?” Oh yes. Our friends do remember us and pray for us. Death cannot be the beginning of a state of affairs which would be worse than what men call ingratitude.

If Jeremias the Prophet could pray for the children of Israel after he had been two hundred years dead, our friends may pray for us when they are gone. And can we not pray for them? Why not? Does death cause them to be out of reach of our prayers? If so, why? We are told that nothing defiled can enter heaven; but, show me the soul that goes out of the world unstained. Some souls cannot enter heaven at once; not until they are purified.

For them we can pray. But to those in heaven we pray, that they may intercede for us, lest we go astray. The question, that we cannot tell whether they hear our prayers or not, may be set aside in view of the fact that: Prayers addressed to the Saints in heaven have been offered by the faithful in the Church from the beginning.

Now, poor old Mrs. Lincoln had come to the time of her departure, for she did not long survive the accident which happened to her when

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she was out on one of her errands of charity with her devoted daughter.

A few days before she went she called her two daughters to her separately, to say her last words of counsel and advice. To Clarissa she said:

“My daughter: when I was carrying you before birth, I gave you to the Lord, to serve Him in His Sanctuary, — hoping that you would be a boy and become a minister. Somehow or other you must fulfill my promise. You cannot be a minister, but you can give up your life to serve God by doing good to the poor, feeding the hungry, and clothing and housing the naked and homeless. If this you would do, God, I am sure, for the solemn promise I made Him, would show you a way to perform such a duty well. Remember all I have taught you, and be pious and religious always. For only by piety and religion can you save your soul. And now, one last thing: if ever your long lost brother returns, remember that your home is his, for my sake, — the mother whom you love. So, whatever be his state when he does come, treat him kindly, and kill “the fatted calf for the son who was dead and is alive again, who was lost and is found.” And now, let your father and sister come again,

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for I am near the end."

So they knelt to pray, and as the words of the "Lord's Prayer" were said, the good mother went away out of life into the great life beyond the grave.

There was mourning and sorrow in the house. There were visits of condolence. There was the funeral, with its shocking spectacle of a host of morbid curiosity-seekers, who came to see "the remains," and who would go away to gossip about and criticise everything, from the shroud on the corpse and the probable price of the material of which it was made to the flavor of the tea and coffee which was to be had by all comers into the old kitchen. There was the long procession of sleighs to the cemetery, with its "tomb" or receiving vault; the men standing in two long lines with hats removed, a Catholic custom; while the "bearers" carried the coffin and left it within, to be buried in the spring when the frost should be out of the ground.

* * * * *

How desolate the old home to-night, — now that Mother is gone! But Clarissa had a dream that night, in which she thought she saw her mother, clothed in white and looking very

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happy, as if she would say to her: "All is well with me, my daughter." And after that Clarissa was consoled. How kind our Guardian Angels are to send us such visions for our happiness. It lightened all the household in the morning when she told it at the breakfast table, and her father said to her:

"Surely, my daughter, you are a child of grace."

"Troubles never come singly," says the old proverb. And in the Lincoln family it came true, for Clarissa's older sister was dead only a few months after her mother. Thus does God try us in this world in the furnace of His affliction, for unless we are tried we cannot be approved.

With resignation did Clarissa bear the death of her sister Sally, named Sarah after her mother. She had "leaned on her," as she was much older and had had more experience in the world. Now Clarissa must go forth to the conquest more alone than ever, having but her father left to her of all the dear friends of her youth. And he was a friend to her in deed and in truth; helping her, encouraging her, cheering her if she needed help, courage or happiness.

They were like two lovers, the old father and

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his daughter; and no one ever ventured, while he lived, to pay court to his daughter. She took his arm when they walked from Church, lest some officious person might advance. All understood it, and she was left alone, without one "lover," except her dear old father, whom she sometimes laughingly called her "beau." The days never dragged, nor were the nights long, while Clarissa kept house nearly twenty years for her father. There were checkers, backgammon and chess to be played; there were Plutarch, Rollin, and Shakespeare to be read, — or Barne's Notes on the Bible. Scott's Family Bible was the relief for many a long hour when her father had become too old to be out at night, and could no longer work all day on the farm.

There was the annual "Cattle Show," where Clarissa displayed her bread, butter and preserves, and took away many an ugly bronze medal as a trophy. And who can forget her father, at the age of eighty-six, in the "Ploughing Match," and winning it, too, from a dozen younger men than he, who prided themselves on their ability as farmers?

The years were passing swiftly, and, as time went on, they seemed to pass quicker and quicker. And it came to her father's turn to go



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now; she thought, as she saw him failing: "This is my last sorrow, and then I can go on alone to the end of my days." But sorrow never leaves us in this world, and her "last sorrow" she would know only as she came to die herself.

"My time to die. What shall I be doing then? Shall I be prepared?" There was one thing that Mr. Lincoln had inherited from his Catholic ancestors: that a Christian should always live in the fear of death. And so he had faced death in imagination daily, until the reality of its presence became a familiarity to him, and he had not the fears so many have who put it far away from them. Daily he prayed for that hour to come and find him with his lamp trimmed and burning. And when it did come to him, one thing he could say: "I never willingly wronged anyone." He had been a faithful member of the church; a keeper of the Ten Commandments; a great reader of the Bible, and a man of prayer. He was a total abstainer; he was a public-spirited citizen, having been trusted to represent his town twice in the Legislature, and once his district in the Senate.

But he was not a "good politician;" he was too upright. Everyone respected him, and those who knew him well loved him. For he had a

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heart as true as steel and as big as the sea. It was the night he died that he said to Clarissa on that long remembered evening when she had been playing and singing some of the music he loved:

"I feel my age weighing me down to-night, my daughter, and I may never live to see another summer. So, now, come here and sit at my feet and put your head on my knees while I give you my last words."

And as she sat there, according to his will, he spoke to her and said:

"My daughter, you are the last. Never forget to be kind to all men, who are made to the image and likeness of God and for whom Christ died. So give to everyone a chance to be heard before you condemn him, and never hesitate an instant to acknowledge your fault if you find that you were wrong or have made any mistake in some matter. If you will remember the old motto: 'Let Truth prevail, though the Heavens fall,' you will never have much trouble of conscience in this world. And a troubled conscience is the worst of troubles that the world can bring to one. Be faithful to religion, and follow the old. Read your bible every day, and say your prayers as your mother taught you, and as I have



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done. You are well provided for with a good house and farm, and could make some man happy if you chose. And one word more, — Remember to take the part of the down-trodden and oppressed, for the Gospel says that Christ will say to those who do so: ‘Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto Me.’ And now I am drowsy and will sleep awhile.” And while he slept he died.

Clarissa wrote down these words in a book and cherished them in her heart as a legacy more precious than the old homestead, to be the rule and guide of her future life.

“So your father’s gone from you, dear. Oh, how well I remember, as if it was but yesterday, the day my own old father died. I was a little one, but the sight of death for the first time, and the wake, and the priest coming to read over him, and him lying there with my mother holding me up to look at him for the last time and saying: ‘That’s where you’ll be yourself, some day.’ O well, I never forgot it, and times like this bring it back to me. Now, you go and rest, and I will put everything in order as you would yourself, and then bye-and-bye I will bring you in a fine cup of tea.”

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Clarissa, nothing loth, let Mrs. Egan take charge of things while the funeral was in progress. She gave her great comfort with her quiet ways and her quaint, interesting stories of the strange customs of the old country. Then came the day of the funeral and the ride to the church, with the long, distasteful sermon, telling of all the good qualities of the poor man; all, except his real ones, which Clarissa knew better than any one now. Then, the same ordeal while every one passed in review before the coffin. She had taken her "last look" before going to the church, and cared little for the criticism of those who wondered why she did not advance after the rest and who "thought it strange." Then they all went to the cemetery, and here it was that Clarissa's heart was moved. For all the poor people of the town had gathered there to pay their respects to the "Father of their friend, Miss Lincoln." Yes, she saw them, and knew something of the reward that comes to those who do good to the poor. It was little in itself to offer, but it was worth infinitely more to her than the stiff, formal visits of some people who came to make calls of condolence.

"Sure, then, Miss, we was asking ourselves what we could do for you in your trouble. And,

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says I, we ought, every one of us, to be in the graveyard the day he is getting buried. And the priest said the same from the Altar on Sunday. And he spoke well of your father, and told us he could be a good model for some of us." Thus did old Mrs. Egan help Clarissa, and she never forgot it, for they became fast friends.

It was the first of May, and the buds were bursting into leaf, when Mr. Lincoln was buried. A robin was calling his mate out in the orchard two weeks after and it was clear, after a little shower in the afternoon. Clarissa was seated at some work, while the help was finishing up the last stroke of work in the kitchen, when she heard a heavy step on the piazza, and a knock. She ran lightly down, to find an old man about seventy, standing shame-facedly at the door.

"Are you one of the Lincoln's?" he inquired.

"Yes, I am the last of them," she replied. He laughed at this as at a good joke and said to her:

"I heard you was good to the poor, and I came up the hill to see about it. Can you give me some food to eat?"

"Certainly, sir. Come in," she said.

"I guess you don't know me," he went on, as he was deep in the food set before him. "You never saw me before now, did you?"

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Then came a sudden stopping of the heart as Clarissa looked at him. Then she said:

"You are my brother Sam."

"Well, and you - - you must be Clarissa," he said, and they stared at each other. "But stop," he said, "I may be an impostor. Here is my proof." And he threw down before her on the table a bundle of papers. His discharge from the army, some letters from his father and mother, and a photograph of the family taken just before he went away.

"Now, Clarissa, what are you going to do with me? I am a drunkard, and have been a tramp. But I can't tramp any more. I have a bullet in me which I got in the war. Are you going to turn me out?"

"Turn you out? No. I'll make a man of you and stick by you. Don't you tell me what you have done. The last words Mother said to me were: 'When Sam comes home to you, kill the fattened calf.' And I am going to do it. You keep on eating, while I go up and get your room ready for you. It's been kept for you ever since." The old man burst out crying:

"Why, Clarissa, I've been no good to you. And I neglected Mother, for I was afraid and

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ashamed to come home, and would not come now, only I haven't got long to live."

In the evening after supper he told her his wanderings; how that during the war he had been thrown in with a Catholic chaplain, and had turned Catholic. How that he was afraid to come home after that and had lived until lately in the far West. He told her that he had not practised the Catholic religion because he was a drunkard. He told her that he had the consumption, and that he had come back to the old home to die. He said that he had seen the priest of the village before he came up to the house and had told him all his story.

"And now," he said, "I want to die here."

"And you shall die here, — and live here, if I can do anything. Catholic or not, it makes no difference to me. You are my brother and mother's boy." And then she said, as she laughed: "I guess that calf will be a fat chicken, but we'll play it's veal, Sam, eh?" And so she made merry and caressed him, for he was her brother, "her mother's boy."

He did not live long after he came home, and in September Clarissa had him buried in the little Catholic grave yard as she had promised. But before he died he had more than one visit

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from the priest, whom Clarissa treated with politeness simply, but avoided as much as possible. Sam passed away, blessing her for all her kindness, but she said it was nothing, that he was her brother and she could do no less.

After this the old house seemed more lonely, and Clarissa began to cast about in her mind for something to do during the coming winter. She had a good woman and two kind men to run the farm, and could depend on all of them. But she was a woman of much education and more refinement, and her "help" could not sympathize much in the studies that she pursued each winter. She had left the High School with a good knowledge of Latin and Greek, and had acquired a reading acquaintance with French and German.

She knew all the rocks and trees, flowers and herbs. The birds and beasts of the district were familiar to her, and their haunts and habits. How should she engage herself this winter?

"I believe I'll just go over to Grace Buckminster and have a talk with her about it."

But as Grace Buckminster lived a mile away, Clarissa will be gone all the afternoon, and we will have an opportunity to have a look at her property on the farm.



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Surely the Angels have cause for rejoicing today, for one has heard Clarissa's thoughts expressed, and he and Sam's angel have talked it over.

In Heaven or in Purgatory, there are father, mother, sisters and brothers who are not forgetting Clarissa, and their hearts are glad today for they know too, her resolution.

CHAPTER IV

The Farm

BUT let us leave her, and renew our youth in a walk over the farm and a resurrection of all sacred and old memories of days now long departed. The old well sweep has given place to the wind mill and its tank, to supply the house with running water. The great barns for hay and cattle, and all the stores for winter, are white with their first coat of whitewash. Here come the cows home from the pasture, with Colly the shepherd dog, the friend of everyone of them. Each creature knows its own stall, and Clarissa knows her own cattle by the name over the stall.

Hark to the milk now, as it sings against the bottom of the pail! Therein is rich health and wealth. Come to the milk house where the little brook is conducted into a long wooden sluice wherein the cans of milk are securely held and cooled in the draft of fresh air and running water. You step into the creamery, kept clean and sweet under the shade of the great mulberry tree that hangs its boughs over it. A



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fine aviary too, — the tree, when its fruit has ripened.

The butter of the Lincoln's has always been famous, and Clarissa knows as well how to make it as did the first ancestors who came from the fens of England. She has always enough to spare; and of pork, fattened on buttermilk and corn, there was always a great quantity.

What a day it was when the butcher came to kill the pigs! How we would run to escape the death-squeal of the creature, and then come slinking round half afraid, until the pig had been hung up to cool off. We had to carry buckets of hot water to the tubs where the brutes were scalded. Then there was the cleaning of the sausage cases, the cooking of livers for dinner, and the cutting up, the salting, the pickling and smoking, and sausage and sowse-making for a week or two.

And what a sight that cold room in the back of the house where hung the white clean spare ribs, and where crocks of clean lard, and tubs of sowse made into heads and feet, and long strings of sausages, vied in tempting the appetite, with the frozen carcasses of geese and turkeys.

I can still smell the smoky odor of the hams and shoulders which came in later from the

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smoke house. I can taste the "scraps" which we had for supper with corn bread and "shells", the evening after the lard had been "tried out."

Clarissa had early learned methodical habits of life, having a set time to do certain things and keeping to it. She rose early, and always gave her first waking thoughts to God. Then there were fires to be built and breakfast to be prepared. After prayers, which she still kept up daily after her father's death, she would run out for a look about the farm for an hour, and before nine, had settled down for a morning's work. Dinner over and things cleared away, she had her little nap of fifteen minutes, and then a long afternoon for work or visits to the sick and poor. Evenings had for years been given up to study and Bible reading. Clarissa's knowledge of the Bible was not merely mechanical, but eminently practical, and the Bible that she liked best was the old folks' with the "Apocrypha" as they called it.

One day some one was saying to her that she did too much among the poor, and perhaps it might encourage them to idleness. In a moment she said, "Alms redeem the soul from sin," and added she, "I think it is true in my case. I find great peace of mind in temptation after coming

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home from a visit to the poor or sick." She could repeat large portions of the Bible from memory, and loved to be repeating them to herself when she was at work, according to the advice of St. Paul.

She was not to be puzzled by jokers, who would like to try her by asking where certain texts — not in the Bible at all — were to be found in it. And in this she was a model to be followed by the new minister, who knew more about the gossip of the town than about his Bible.

The help on the farm was, with her, as they had been in her mother's days, part of the family. And they all had their meals together, and together had their devotions. They were "help", not "servants", for Clarissa worked as hard as any of them and enjoyed it.

"Work never hurt anyone yet," she used to say. "It is better that I wear out than rust out."

Her property, besides the farm, had been well invested for her before her father's death, and each year she drew a nice little sum for interest, out of which she paid the taxes. The rest went to the Savings Bank. As for the farm, it was self-supporting, and, had Clarissa gone on for

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ten years, she might easily have doubled her fortune.

But there was a destiny waiting for her that she knew not of, and changes were coming in that would overturn all her plans and substitute others quite different. Clarissa was all unconscious of the future in store for her, even though little things showed how the current of her life was setting.

The angels had met again, ready to begin, at the command of God, the assault upon her soul. They began it so quietly and so gently that Clarissa had no notion of what was going on within her. One afternoon there came back to her memory the dream that she had told to Mrs. Egan, and with it a great sweetness and peace. It seemed to her as if her soul had uttered the word aloud:

"I wish I could be a nun. Their life must be holy, and so quiet and pleasing to God. But, then I would have to be a Roman Catholic. Ugh! But there are lots of good Catholics. I am sure Mrs. Egan is a better woman than I am. I would be willing to be a Catholic to be as good as she is. Why! What am I thinking of? Is not the Pope anti-Christ? But then if he is, how can Mrs. Egan's goodness be real? I don't

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believe he is anti-Christ after all. God is too good to let evil prevail for so many hundred years. Besides, how can "an evil tree bring forth good fruit," any more than "a good tree bring forth evil fruit?" If I judge the Catholic Church by its fruits, I find plenty of good. I shall have to look for anti-Christ somewhere else than in the Pope."

While she was meditating thus, who should walk in but old Mrs. Egan herself.

"Why, I was just thinking of you," said Clarissa. "Sit down while I get a cup of tea for you." As she was sitting sipping her tea, Clarissa told her what she had been thinking of.

"Ay my dear, you would make a fine nun, so you would. I'd be the proud old woman to see you one of our Lady's daughters."

"How do you mean Mrs. Egan? Me, a daughter of the Virgin?"

"To be sure. Now my dear, we are all children of God, and Mary is the Mother of God, then are we not also the children of Mary?"

"But you don't mean that God had a mother? Then she would be equal to him," said Clarissa.

"No, of course I do not mean that. But our Lord was God when he was born of the Blessed Virgin, was he not?"

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"Yes of course he was," she answered.

"Then she is the Mother of Our Lord, both God and man," said Mrs. Egan.

"Well, is that what you Catholics mean when you say Mary is the Mother of God? I thought it was something else," said Clarissa.

"That is just what we believe. So you see how we can all be called children of Mary, for her Son is our brother," said the Old lady.

"Well, Mrs. Egan, I have learned something today that I never knew before. I am thankful to you for telling it to me. You know we Protestants are taught to hate your religion. But I have got a little love for it, because of you who are so good, and your daughter the nun. Why, just before you came in, I was thinking, and wishing I could be a nun. I had been remembering my dreams I told you about so long ago. Perhaps I will be, too, some day. Stranger things have happened."

"O, you'll be a Catholic some day, dear. And I will pray for you to the Blessed Mother of us all to give you the gift of faith," Mrs. Egan replied, and she wiped away the tears that fell from her eyes.

"Well, I do not see how I can ever become a Catholic. But I would like to give up all I have

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and serve the poor and needy," said Clarissa.

"And you'll do it as a Catholic," said Clarissa's friend.

Her heart was softening, and in her soul prejudice had received a hard blow. For now she was ready to hear and to listen to anyone who came to teach her the truth. The prayers of the poor were hers, and they were efficacious prayers which God loves to answer when they come before Him, as the only return which the poor can make for the charity they receive from souls like Clarissa's. From that day the Egans never ceased to offer Communion and rosaries for the conversion of our Puritan Maiden.

The doubts that came to Clarissa's mind after this conversation were numerous. Had Protestantism been mistaken all these years? And what is Protestantism? Is the Baptist, the Congregationalist, the Unitarian, — the real true and genuine Protestant? The Catholic Religion ought to be dead by this time if Protestantism is the only true religion; but it is flourishing right here in this town, where two hundred years ago they would have put to death any priest who dared to invade the colony.

One day the old minister called when she was

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alone, and she made him stay to tea and sent him home in the evening in her carry-all. Their conversation began on works of charity; and Clarissa was somewhat surprised to hear him commending them as good and worthy of reward, because of his faith in Christ.

"Yes, Clarissa", he said, "the Epistle of James has been my study now in my old age. And I am no longer a Calvinist; I think if I were a younger man I should become an Episcopalian. But I am old and must stay where I am, for the few who come to hear me."

"Well, I never could believe the doctrine of Imputation and I never tried to. My bible teaches me different", said Clarissa. The old man looked at her tenderly for a moment and then remarked:

"The Bible is a wonderful book".

"Yes", she replied. "But, here is a question I have been wishing to ask some one for a long time. How is it that the Bible teaches such contradictory things to the people who read it? Surely one would think it ought to teach one and the same thing".

"Ah, Clarissa, there lies a great and knotty problem. How can we find out religion from the Bible? The old answers about the Holy



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Ghost teaching each heart are not true. For the Bible was not in the hands of the people all the time, — not until the discovery of printing. The Bible is a hard book, and although I have studied it and prayed it day and night for nearly seventy years, I confess there are many things in it which are beyond me. Yes, Clarissa, I feel as if in my old age some one had cut the cords of the Bible that once bound me to religion, and I am drifting, I know not where. Well, I can't be here long anyway, and I know and love my God, if there be no Bible at all".

"I have the same doubts, Mr. Atwood", said Clarissa, "and have had them for a long time. But I have habits of mind that hold me, so I do not feel just as you do. I have thought, however, in this connection, that the Bible needs an interpreter for its proper understanding in all completeness, although a candid person can find truth enough in its pages to save his soul."

"But the question comes up: If the Bible needs an interpreter, that interpreter must be divine. This admitted, would bring you to the Catholic position at once. They undertake to prove their doctrines from the Bible. But they claim that the Church and the Pope were placed here by God as the supreme interpreter for it.

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That is the cutting of the Gordian knot, but it does not loosen it in a legitimate way."

"Yes, Mr. Atwood, I have had a great many doubts lately in regard to religion, and I see you are not quite without them. I have changed many of my opinions, and some of my prejudices are entirely gone. But I do not propose to leave your church. It is very dear to me. I am praying and studying the Bible still. Pray for me, Mr. Atwood". The old patriarch knelt down and prayed for her as she asked him and her heart was strengthened by his prayer. He never came again, for in a week he was found dead in his bed, the problem of the Bible solved at last.

His visit and his words gave Clarissa a great advance along the road that leads to truth. And as she went about her duties of the house and farm each day, she became more and more desirous to know how to find out all religious truth about God. The Bible remained, good as far as it went, but it did not go far enough. Did it or did it not? A puzzle for her. Poor woman. She was alone, and knew no one who could help her. Oh, how many poor souls there are living in doubt and vexation of spirit, not knowing where to turn for light. The light of the Cath-



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olic Church shines round about them and they see it not. So, though she was near the light, she still groped in darkness, for her time had not yet come. But angels today were rejoicing among themselves, as they saw how insensibly she was drawing nearer and nearer to the Church, and many were the plans and schemes that these Holy Messengers arranged and carried out to help her on her way.

For they are enlightened from on High as we are not, and can help in many ways the direction of events. They suggest glad thoughts and turn them for us into good channels. While we may forget, they never do. While we may be careless, they are always careful. Their influence on us is immense, and only in the last day when our guardian comes to fetch us, shall we begin to understand how high Heaven has bowed down to earth to lift us up to Itself. It was long that night before Clarissa slept, and when she did, her sleep was overcharged with dreams. Sometimes she seemed to be a nun and was so happy in the thought, until there came some evil one who mocked at her nun's garb and said:

“You are not a Romanist, are you? A daughter of the Puritans?”

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And then she found herself sitting alone with her Bible, and a mocking voice cried:

"The Bible alone won't do. It is not enough. You need the Pope."

She awoke in fear and, turning over, dreamed again. This time she thought she was on Mount Calvary and saw the procession of the Crucifixion approaching. There was our Lord bearing His cross; His Mother and St. John and Mary Magdalen. She saw all the horrors of the Crucifixion and she thought that she went to the Mother of Jesus to comfort her. And then it seemed as if Mary took her in her arms and said:

"My Son, this is a child of mine. Help her." And He, as He looked down upon them from the cross, replied:

"Some day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." And the face of Christ resembled that of the priest, Father McSorely; and yet there was something in it that recalled the faces of many, especially the poor whom she had relieved. She woke, and it was the morning of a bright day in October, a cool and quiet Sabbath. The memory of that dream remained with her all day, — yes, and all her life.

In the afternoon she went out for a quiet



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stroll in the woods on the farm and there, under a rock as she stood above them, was the large contingent of the Egan family. Clarissa had come upon them unawares and, being perfectly hidden, determined to watch them for a few moments. It seemed that young Mrs. Egan had taken her children out for a walk and at the same time to fulfill a duty which Christian mothers should, to her children.

"Now, let me hear you say your prayers right," she said to the youngest, a boy of nine. He began and said the Our Father, and Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed and the Confiteor. Then he began the Act of Faith. Clarissa stayed to hear no more. That Act of Faith had set a train of thought going in her soul that could not be checked. "I believe in these and all the truths Thou hast revealed to Thy Church, because Thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived."

"He has revealed them to His Church," said Clarissa to herself. "Has He revealed them to me? No. Then I must go to the Church to find out what I must believe in matters of religion."

Clarissa had not one Catholic book except her Bible, and this she began to read in a new light now. She was fast coming along to the Catholic

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position, but it would need many a wrench yet before she could be weaned away from the old associations of piety and religion.

The new minister, who had been installed only a month after the death of the old one, had shocked the church-going people by preaching without a text from the Bible on what he called "Subjects of the Day." He told the people who came to hear him that they ought to have a revival of religion, and asked them to pray for it. In the meantime he would take care to secure some good speakers. Clarissa listened to him and half resolved not to go there again.

"But, what should I do on Sunday morning if I couldn't go to church? I will not give that up because it would be breaking the Fourth Commandment. I can hope for a change in the minister."

Although Clarissa was now coming very near to the great change in her life, she felt very much the changes that she saw going on in others. She missed the scholarly discourses of the old minister whom she had heard since she was a child. She missed the fervent supplications which he put up to heaven, not as if he were speaking a piece but like a child asking favors from a father.



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There were rumors of changes in the order of services, and the new minister wanted to introduce a responsive service, with singing.

“Just like the ‘Piscopals,’” said a lady. “When they do that, I’ll just turn Catholic at once.”

Poor Clarissa. You are fast coming to the time when the sword shall pierce your heart and divide you in the midst with great pain and grief. Never fear, you have many friends here and in Heaven, who know all about you and have a care for your soul.

Be brave, then, in tribulation. The furnace of trial will not be so hot and fierce as it seems. The end will be peace and you will look back and wonder how you could have been so apprehensive of the future, as it is all so different from what you had pictured in your imagination.

CHAPTER V

Lovers

ONE Sunday morning as Clarissa came out of the Church (it was in October and a fine day for walking) Mr. Bigelow spoke to her:

“ ‘Mornin’ Miss Lincoln, can I walk home with you this mornin’? ’ ”

“ ‘Well Mr. Bigelow, I am not going home,’ ” she said, and so walked away rather stiffly. “ ‘Ha, ha, ha,’ ” laughed everyone who saw it, and poor Mr. Bigelow, who was a widower of six months and had two daughters nearly grown up, went home in a state of considerable discomfort. As for Clarissa, she mused over it.

“ ‘Well, did I ever. That old man setting up for me, and I’m near as old as he is. I got off easy this time, I hope he won’t pursue the quest.’ ” And she went down to see some poor children who had the measles, and needed some little attention which she could give them better than their own unskilled mother. She got home in the afternoon, and after dinner she sat in the twilight musing.

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“Here am I, an old maid. And I have promised God to be one in order to help the poor better. So there can’t be any marrying for me, but I do hope no one else will come hectoring me. I suppose they think I need some one to ‘look after the farm.’ Well, I am ready for them when they come anyway, whoever they may be. I guess Mr. Bigelow will not be the first to come up here after the set back I gave him this morning.”

She did not have long to wait, however. It was only a few days later, when just as she sat down after supper there came a knock at the door. She rose and went to open it, and let in and showed to a seat, no less a person than Silas Haynes, or “Si” as he was called by everyone. Now Si Haynes was a good man, sober and industrious, and had lived with his father ever since Clarissa could remember. He had no great ambition to do anything for himself, and he just “lived along,” working for nothing and expecting to fall into his father’s property when he died.

“Good evening, Si,” said Clarissa.

“Evenin’, ma’am,” he replied.

“Take a chair, Si,” suggested Clarissa.

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"Wa'al, I don't care if I do," was the answer. Then there was an awkward pause.

"Early winter, — think?" he queried.

"No, I think not," she replied.

"H'm." Another pause.

Miss Lincoln looked over at Si over the top of her spectacles, as if to inquire the object of his visit. So he went on.

"Kinder dry fall, ain't it?"

"Well, we haven't had much rain lately, Si," said she.

"Potatoes all dug?" he ventured.

"O yes, and housed," she assented.

"Well, I wanter know! H'm. Miss Lincoln, I-er-er was a-thinking, er-er that er- mebbe you wanted a man to sort of help round the place here. H'm----" he said.

"Why, Si, are you looking for a job? Because if you are, Si, there's no chance here. I have got all the hired men I want and can take care of. If you want a job plowing in the spring, I guess I can give it to you."

This threw Si off the track entirely, but he resolved to make a new start, so he began:

"How'd you like the sermon last Sunday?"

"I didn't see you there, Si." His pew was just in front of Clarissa's.

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"No, I had to stop home. But I heard all about it, though," he said, nothing undaunted.

"No doubt," said Clarissa, as her needles clicked sharply at the knitting she had in hand. Another pause, — during which the cat woke up and stretched.

"Nice cat, that one," said Si.

"Yes," answered Clarissa, "Jumbo is a good cat."

"H'm, h'm. Wa'al I guess I'd better be goin'. Mother'll think I'm goin' to spend the evenin'!" and so at last he went. Then Clarissa sat down and laughed until the tears came, and Jumbo came rubbing against her. So to him she addressed herself:

"No, pussy, old Clarissa is not going to be anything else but an old maid for the rest of her days. Just think of it, Jumbo, poor Si Haynes coming here to call. Why, he never came here before in his life, and he had on his best clothes, and — ha, ha, ha, Jumbo, he was afraid of me. I'll scare 'em all off Jumbo, I am not going to be married at my time of life."

And Jumbo purred and leaped into Clarissa's lap to be petted a little, as if he had understood it all and was as much amused as his mistress.


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But Clarissa chuckled over the affair until she went to bed, to sleep soundly and wake in the morning a more confirmed old maid than ever.

It was the next afternoon that Clarissa put on a short skirt and a pair of cowhide boots, took a large basket and went off to gather nuts among the walnut trees. She certainly was a picture as she stood with a long pole beating the branches. And it would require considerable of a man even so much as to address her in her semi-Amazonian costume. Her basket was about filled up when she heard the sound of wheels, and saw on the road a few rods away, Mr. Bigelow driving his wagon up toward her house. She seized the pole and began to thrust it at the walnuts as if her life depended on it, never casting a look at the road to see if Mr. Bigelow perceived her or not. In about two minutes she threw down the pole and picking up enough nuts to fill her basket, marched off home.

"Any one been here since I was out?" she asked of the hired girl.

"No Miss Clarissa, no one, I see old Mr. Bigelow passing by in his wagon, and I reckoned he was a goin' to stop. But jest as he got in front of the house, he hitched up his horse and went by kinder quick."



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“And I guess I won’t be troubled with him any more,” said Clarissa to herself.

And, as she was not a gossip, these stories never got beyond her, even to her most intimate friends. If Clarissa did not care for the attention of men who were seeking after her wealth, she had other things in which her love found satisfaction to rest, and these were the works of real charity in which she was engaged. She was not a prominent member of the “Sewing Circle”, nor of the “Lend-a-Hand-Club”, both of which would trumpet forth their “charities”, which often consisted in donations of blue checked aprons and “flat holders” to indignant widows and the poor, and a “Dinner to One Hundred Poor People”, which was described in the current issue of the Weekly Tribune, giving the names of all the ladies who waited on the poor old men and women. She had wit enough to see through the hollowness of such charity as this and avoided it, though she would subscribe when the Lady Treasurer came round with the subscription list. But she would go out to see some poor, despised family, and sit up all night nursing some poor invalid, while the rest of the household had a little sleep. And she would pay the doctor’s bill, and for the



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prescriptions; and when they recovered she had beef tea and jellies for them out of the abundance of her own household.

When a whole family was down with the diphtheria, she remained in the poor, shabby house for five days all the time, and buried three of the children who died, never saying a word about it to anyone. They came to look upon her as an angel, and Clarissa used to say:

"I have so many lovers now, I don't know which of them I love best."

It was early in November when the snow came that year, and the day before old Mrs. Egan had been over for a call.

"My dear," she said to Clarissa, "I am getting very old, and I think I am going to die soon."

"O Mrs. Egan, don't talk that way. Why, a woman of ninety who can walk all the way up here, as you have done, will live to be a hundred. Are you not feeling well?"

"Well as usual, dear. But the Banshee has been crying in the house, and it's for me it's come. So I came over today to tell you that I might never see you again, and I want to say something as my last words."

Poor Clarissa could not keep back her tears



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and so she said nothing, listening to the dying injunction of her old friend:

“I’ve known you, my dear, now for fifteen years and more, and I’ve watched you and I’ve heard all about you from the many friends you’ve got here among my people. I know how you have nursed the sick and buried the dead and sent them coal and food, and been easy about the rent with more families than you can remember. And all we have to give you in return is our poor prayers. No! Don’t stop me now, — let me go on. You have the prayers of all the Irish Catholics in the place, from the priest on the altar to the lisping child at its mother’s knee. And now, mind, dear, these prayers all come to you as your reward for your goodness to us, and God is going to hear them, for you and for us. When I am dead and gone you will be a nun. O yes, — I know you can’t help being a Catholic; you are too good to be a Protestant all your life. I hear more than you think, and I can read you like a book, — and at this moment you are anxious to know all about our Holy Religion. As soon as you know it, you will love it as your old friend does. It is the old religion of your forefathers, dear, and you will come back to it, and your dream will come true.

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Now, one thing I must ask you: When you become a Catholic, will you pray for me?"

The old lady waxed eloquent with the excitement of her words, and Clarissa could only say:

"Mrs. Egan, you read me better than I do myself. Yes, when I do become a Catholic, my first thought will be of you."

They sat there in silence, gazing into the embers for a long time, until it was the hour for Mrs. Egan to go. But Clarissa had her stay to tea and afterwards drove her home in the carry-all.

She saw her once more. That night the snow came down, and in the morning one of Mrs. Egan's grandchildren came up to say that his grandmother had been taken very bad in the night, and, could Miss Lincoln come down and see her? So the horse and sleigh were put upon the road and the little boy and Clarissa drove off.

The attack was pneumonia, and Clarissa did whatever she could until the doctor came. He saw at once that there was no hope and told her so.

"I will send up medicine which will relieve the pain as I go through the village, but I shall be surprised if she lives through the day."

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“What did the doctor say, dear,” she whispered. “I have to go soon, — is that it?” Clarissa nodded. She could not speak.

“Well, then, — who will go after the priest for me? I am not going to last long, so hurry away.”

There was no one to send but young Mrs. Egan, and she could not be spared. The boy who had come after Clarissa had gone to school. So Clarissa said: “I’ll go,” and without another word she hurried out to the shanty where the horse was standing and drove off. Pulling up at the door of the priest’s house, she rang vigorously. He answered it in person.

“Come in,” he said.

“No, Father, I can’t. But you get on your coat quick and come with me, for old Mrs. Egan is dying, and may be dead by the time we get back.”

The priest did not wait to think, for he knew Clarissa well enough, and, telling her to wait for him at the church door, he soon joined her there, and away they sped. How that colt did get over the roads, not yet “broken out”, how quickly perhaps the angels can tell. But they arrived in season, thanks to the zeal and horsemanship of Clarissa.

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After the priest had been alone with the old lady for a time, he came out and beckoned to them all to come while he gave the Last Sacraments. Clarissa knelt down with the rest, who recited the Litany of the Saints, while the priest went on with his share of the work of assisting the poor soul. At length, after a long time, the prayers being finished, Mrs. Egan signified that she had something to say to Clarissa. So she came and bent over her, to hear her say:

"My dear, you have been a Sister of Mercy to me, and I would have died without the priest, had you not come here and fetched him. Remember, you are to be a real Sister of Mercy some day, and then pray for me. Good-bye."

And so she died, and those were her last words.

As Clarissa was getting ready to take the priest home again, she saw him standing alone in the kitchen and, acting on the impulse of the moment, she went up to him and said, as she gave him a five dollar bill:

"Father, can you say some Masses for Mrs. Egan with this?" He looked at her in amazement, and then said, as he took the money:

"Yes, certainly," and then added to himself, "And some for you also." It was night-fall be-



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fore Clarissa got back home again, but she felt the happiness of a good day's work accomplished, too. For she had to visit the undertaker, and get the burial certificates of death from the doctor, and half a dozen other things, — before she knew a moment's rest. But angels watched around her bed that night, and gave her tired body and mind the refreshing sleep they needed. And, as they ministered to her, they rejoiced, and congratulated one another on the good day's work accomplished, and on the work which would soon begin. She was at the funeral, which went from home to the cemetery, caring nothing for the criticism of the people who said:

“See how Miss Lincoln is going around with those Irish Catholics.” Bigotry was about dead in Clarissa's heart, and the events of the next two weeks killed it altogether.

CHAPTER VI

The New Minister's Sermon

NEXT Sunday was clear and cold, and Clarissa bundled up and made her way to the old church in the village. Mr. Hawkins, the new minister, was of the opinion that the people of the town needed a "good shaking up," as he called it, and so he determined to give it to them. There is no doubt in the world, that it is hard for a minister to preach to seventy-five people, in a church built to hold eight hundred, especially where people of other denominations can boast of churches filled twice every Sunday.

There were some Catholics in the town who were constantly twitting their Protestant neighbors with the fact. Now a dying man does not like to have his end hastened by cruelty of any sort, so when the enthusiastic Catholic was constantly delivering such sentiments as:

"Your Protestantism is dead, and we are going to boss everything," or, "This is no longer New England, it is New Ireland," there was furnished a ground on which Protestants could

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once again unite as they did years ago, namely, "Opposition to Rome's encroachments."

The ministers were the first to take up, and "sound the alarm," as they said, and the A. P. A. movement, directed from across the border, and fed with fuel furnished by indiscreet boasters, flooded the land from sea to sea for a few months. There were other causes also, but it is not the place to emphasize them here. Race hatred, jealousy of losing the little hold they had, anger at sight of the conversions becoming so numerous, — all these were at the bottom of the uprising which really fell flat, so far as accomplishing the work for which it was destined.

Mr. Hawkins was one of the prime movers in the establishment of the A. P. A. council in the town, and as is often the way with secret societies, it spread rapidly at first.

"Our purpose and aim is to inspire Patriotism among the people." If there is one fact more true than another, it is this, that the noble virtue of Patriotism has its inception in the family life, and he who is not a good obedient child, will never be a decent Patriot. You can make men and boys shout for the flag for pay of one kind or another, but you never can create a

home and the family, which combinations.

But to attempt to teach love of and its flag, by making it a reward "good boy or girl at school," is to make a knave or a fool, or a mixture of both.

What sort of "patriots" they rejected the A. P. A. movement, as well now, since they went back to whence they came, descendants of those who fled away when our fathers set their country free from England the last century.

By this time in the old town, good attendance at the meetings obtained and it was announced that there "patriotic" sermon preached next the Rev. Josiah A. Hawkins in the Central Church.

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Catholic Religion, and it was not an agreeable sermon for Clarissa to listen to, especially when the minister referred to "traitorous Protestants hob-nobbing with Romanists." That the town was all stirred up over it, there was not the shadow of a doubt, for many evenings it was the subject of debate in the village grocery store, a place where farming, politics and religion find a warm reception at all times in discussion.

The "main" store was a large room with counters on three sides. On the left as you entered were the "dry goods," from which you could select any article of woman's apparel, and most everything needed by men. In the back, between two windows, was a display of crockery, and over the counter on the right hand were sold the "W. I. goods" as they are called, which included all the spices, dried fruits, sugar, meal, flour and other things which find their way to our homes through the medium of a country grocery store, not excepting rum. In the middle of the store stood the huge stove, in the midst of a great tin lined box full of sand or sawdust, and around it some dozen or more arm-chairs in which the council were used to sit, to enlighten us with their wisdom.

It was Monday night, after the sermon, and

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there was a large attendance in the store to "see the fun," for it was rumored that Tom Reilly was coming down to the store to see fair play, and Tom had the keenest wit and the sharpest tongue of anyone in town.

"Wa'al, he did hit them hard," said Luke Hastings, "but I guess he'll catch it down to the Catholic Church next Sunday."

"Not much," said Tom Reilly, who had just come in. "We don't go around kicking dead skunks." The minister had alluded to the Catholic Church as a dead pole cat. There was a hearty laugh at Tom's remark, and then old Mr. Shephard asked:

"Mr. Reilly, what do you think of the sermon yesterday?"

"Tell you the truth, I have been so busy working, spreading manure all day, that I wasn't thinking of anything dirty."

"Well, Mr. Reilly, — he said your priests ought to marry."

"So they do, sir. They are married to the Church," replied Tom.

"O, well, Mr. Reilly, so are ministers married to their churches, but they have wives as well," responded Mr. Shephard.

"O, indeed. Now, I was taught to think that

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if a man had two wives, one of them must be bad, wa'ant you?"

At this there was a great shout, for so far Tom had decidedly the best of it. Perhaps, also, there were not a great many supporters of the A. P. A. ideas in the crowd who gathered here every night, for most of them were skeptics.

"He said that Confession was a bad thing, that it corrupts the morals of the people and ought to be put a stop to. How is it, Tom?" asked Joe Adams, who was very friendly with Tom, and knew how to draw him out.

"Well, and what does he know about it? Did he ever go to Confession?"

"No."

"Well, until you've been there as many times as I have, or heard as many confessions as the priest, you've got no business to be saying much about it. I saw a man once in Ireland, trying to make a tar walk with soft soap. He was an idiot," remarked Tom.

"But he said, Mr. Reilly, that the pope had you all under his thumb in religion and politics and everything else," said Joe.

"Why, Joe,— so he has in religion. But he never meddles in my politics. Why, you heard

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Father McSorely and me only six weeks ago, before the election, how we argued. And he voted the straight Republican, and most of us Catholics voted the Democratic Ticket. We never hear a word about politics in our Church, and those who go to the Orthodox Church say they get a dose of it every few months. I used to think when I was a little boy that the moon was made of green cheese, but I found out different when I got older. And perhaps the minister will get older, too."

"Here, — I want to say one word," remarked a gray-haired man with one leg, which reclined across his crutch: — "You all know that I was all through the Civil War, and I lost this leg there. I was lying among a heap of dead and wounded on the battle-field when I came to, after being shot. I thought sure I was going to be left there to die, but I was found out and rescued by a woman who stayed out all night, until it was light enough to see the ambulance corps. If she had left me out in the rain, I'd have died. But she took her shawl, and she tore up the big, white cap she had on, and she fixed up my leg as well as she could, and sat beside me in the rain until the morning. When she came with me to the hospital she fainted away, and afterwards

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she nursed me and called me her 'lost boy,' for I'd have been lost without her. They told me she was sick, and the first day I went on my crutches, I went to see her in her coffin. She was a Sister of Charity, and the man who says anything about those Catholic Sisters is not a bit better, and perhaps not so good as he ought to be."

There was a dead silence for a few minutes, until Tom said:

"Well, gentlemen, I guess I'll have to go now, as long as the non-Catholics are going to fight for us. Good night," and out he went.

There was, however, the greatest excitement in the council of the A. P. A.'s on Wednesday night, when one of the members rose and asked if the real and avowed purpose of the organization was to provoke strife among a people hitherto harmonious. In order to make his question take shape before the meeting, he made the following motion:

"Resolved: That we, the members of Council 110, A. P. A., in solemn assembly, do hereby ratify and approve all the sentiments delivered in the sermon preached by the Reverend Josiah A. Hawkins in the Congregational Church on Sunday last." The motion was seconded in a

... resignations within a week.
men, who had been undeceived by
to the real sentiments to be inculc
. P. A., constituted themselves a
and waited on the priest to tell hi
ame and sorrow that such an att
ave been made. They asked him t
ie sermon in public lecture or in p
ferred to do anything to help him pu
anti-Catholic spirit. Father McS
leased. Who would not be?

“But, gentlemen, let us be calm,
ntil the first excitement has blown o
will ask you to wait on me, and I wil
an be done in defence of the Church
hursday night’s debate in the groc
as even more exciting than that of
; began by Tom Reilly’s walking in
lg:

“Mr. Warren, — are you an A D A

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"Because if you are, you won't get any more Catholic trade."

"Well, you can tell them I'm not!" he emphatically replied. The man had his resignation in his pocket, but he had been seen going to the hall of the A. P. A. the night before.

"What is the matter with A. P. A.'s, Tom?" asked Mr. Shephard.

"O, you better ask some of the members here," said Tom. "I see Luke Hastings ain't here tonight, and he was at their meeting last night. But I saw him out feeding his pigs this morning with a bandage over one of his eyes; and Henry McFarland has a cut lip. Who hit you, Henry? Was it the Reverend Mr. Hawkins?"

"What do you know about the A. P. A., anyway?" growled the subject of Tom's banter.

"O, enough to know that you were in the thickest of the fun last night. We were just outside and heard the row. O, we saw you going in, Henry. Better stay away after this, eh?" asked Tom.

"What do they propose to do, Mr. Reilly?" queried Mr. Shephard again.

"Well, they say they are constituted to protect American Institutions."

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"Who ever said we needed anyone but ourselves and our votes as citizens to do this? Or, when have our institutions been threatened? It is the first I've heard of it," said the old Oracle of the grocery store.

"Well, I'll tell you, Mr. Shephard, these A. P. A.'s are like the old Know-Nothings. There you have the whole story," said Tom.

"I tell you they ain't," retorted Henry Mcfarland.

"O, you know something about them, do you?" said Tom. Henry saw that he had blundered, and soon left the store.

"If all I hear is true," said Tom," — and my information comes pretty straight — they are going to try to keep Catholics from getting into office, holding any position, even as school-teachers."

"Well, they ain't very good Americans, then. For no real true American nowadays asks the religion of his political friend or enemy, other things being equal," remarked Mr. Dyer, who was counted upon only as second to Mr. Shephard in the council of the grocery store.

"That's gospel truth," said Mr. Shephard.

"I have a paper which tells all about them. They were started here in this country by Can-



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adians, and their president is not even an American citizen. He is a "down-homer" from Prince Edward Island," said Tom.

"Well, I guess they ain't worth a great deal of attention, then. But do you think your priest won't answer their attacks, if they make any?" asked Mr. Shephard.

"He will do something, but just what, we do not know now. We can afford to wait. The Catholic Church has had harder battles to fight than this," remarked Tom.

"They may try to burn down your church, as the Know-Nothings did years ago," suggested Mr. Dyer.

"There is little fear. For, the moment there is a cry of fire near the Catholic Church and it is seen to be burning, there will be forty men to one to work in town that same night. We know every one of these A. P. A.'s and we are prepared for them. Never you fear, there won't be any burning of our Church here, — they won't dare to," answered Tom pretty hotly.

"Well, it is a pity people can't let their neighbors alone, and live in peace," said Mr. Dyer.

"The whole trouble is this," added Tom. "Those men want to get into office, and they think to ride in on the religious prejudices of

— answered Mr. Shepherd.

“O, in the first place it will make Catholics attend Church better, and that is a good thing for us. And then you see that a number of Yankees will join when they learn the truth about it. Mr. Crossman’s son. He is going to be a priest soon. He told me that the lie that made him think of being a Catholic when he found that it was a lie that he had to say every time we go to Confession.”

“Well, then, — you ought not to be so angry with them when they do you so much good,” said Mr. Dyer.

“O, well, — you know you don’t like Catholics and senna,” said Tom, and then he went on in the midst of which Tom went on. Poor Clarissa did not know what to say during the sermon or after. Her cheeks were as red as the Rev. Liar vomited



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about the Catholic Religion. But now there was no one, for to no other person had Clarissa breathed a word on the subject. After many hours of thought, she made up her mind that she would not go to her own church next Sunday. But when the day came she had to go somewhere, so she went to the Episcopalian Church. But it was not her "home" and all the time she was there she kept thinking:

"If I've been on the stepping-stone, I'll just step over the brook itself," and so the good people of the Catholic Church were amazed to see her walk up the steps of their little church on Sunday morning. There was an attempt made by a half a dozen to capture her, but they all yielded to Mr. Egan, her old friend's son, and she had a seat in his pew. There she sat, like a cat in a strange garret, sitting, standing, kneeling with the rest, not knowing why, — and interested in all the priest did but understanding nothing of it. She walked home after it was over, and tried to see what was the state of mind in which she was.

"I am in doubt," she said to herself, "and in doubt about what? Let me see what I believe. I am sure that I have to believe right, and to do right in order to save my soul. What do I



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believe? Why, - - in God, in the Trinity, in Jesus Christ and His atonement, and in a future life of happiness or misery, that each one can have for the choosing. What must I do to be saved? Why, "fear God and keep His Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." So far I have no doubts. But now, *how* do I know what I believe, and the code of moral principles I follow? This is the ground where my doubts lie. Why do I believe as I do? Does the Bible teach me all of itself? If it does, it ought to teach others the same, but they say it does not, and we have Baptists and Methodists and Episcopalians, with a hundred more, all holding "the only true religion" from the Bible. There can be no use in investigating any of these forms of Christianity. I shall have to turn my attention to the Catholic Church, and see what it teaches, and on what authority it relies for its teachings. And if it draws me into its fold, I guess I can stand it. Nothing could be worse than to be in this state of doubt in which I am now. I can't go to my own church any more while that minister is there, and I guess I'll have to remain home for a while and pray on Sundays by myself. I would not like to



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go to the Catholic church again just now, while all this excitement is going on."

"If the Mother of Christ is so much loved as the Catholics say she is, perhaps she will do something for me." So that night as she knelt down she said in addition to her prayers:

"Oh Mother of Christ, pray for me."

Rejoice, ye angels, another client is gained for your Queen. Rejoice, ye Holy Souls, one more soul is helped by your prayers. Rejoice, ye Saints in Heaven, a great step has been taken forward by her for whom you have all been praying. She has sought help from the Queen of Angels and men and help is close at hand.

IN New England is one of the new
ing processes of change, which
ever had occasion to note in history

It is not of one hostile race coming
conquest of another in civil and d
toms. Neither has the old stock been
or away, as we record in the history
ings in other countries by conquerors
quiet, almost imperceptible growth
race and a hated religion, side by side
haters, who were growing less and
ber as the days went by, until not could
tell the tale of bigotry and futile
persecution, which a handful of fanatics
to arouse at various times when the
Puritanism was breathing its last.

And so, while the little town is in the
excitement of feverish expectation
Clarissa is preparing to settle her

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causes which led up to the Catholic winning of New England.

The beginning of religious toleration in New England dates to the war of the Revolution, when the colonists threw off the yoke of Great Britain. This good feeling, if so we can call it, was brought about by men who were indifferent to religion on the one hand, but not to commercial interests on the other, and perhaps also to some extent on the other by the intimate relations with A Catholic King and his nation during the war.

It was at the time of the Constitutional Convention in Massachusetts at the end of the last century, that the old "test oath" was abolished, and religious freedom assured to all members of the Commonwealth. It may be well in passing to say here, that those who were not very loyal to the new government, were men like Benedict Arnold.

Then on the side of the Catholic Religion we find Charles Carroll, Archbishop Carroll, and Cardinal Cheverus, Bishop of Boston. The latter especially, by his Apostolic zeal, his wonderful urbanity, his saintly piety, and devotion to a flock scattered over tens of thousands of square miles, filled the hearts even of the most stern



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and uncompromising of Protestants with admiration.

These things and persons are the great foundation-stone on which has been built the magnificent structure of Catholicity in New England, and which today lifts its head above the hills, everyone of which it overtops. "The little stone has become a mountain, and is filling the whole earth."

The advent of the Catholic Religion in this its growth was attended by hardships, general and local. We need not speak of the two "Know Nothing" outbreaks, nor the burning of the Convent in Charlestown, nor the ridiculous, contemptible sneaking away of the ministers from Providence a few years later. These things were as the blood which gave fertilization to the Church, and brought it to the notice, and favorable notice also, of the non-Catholic portion of the community.

Well known also to our readers, is the familiar figure of the "Irish Catholic priest," going from house to house on his "station," building churches and taking care of his charge with a fidelity only known to the Apostles themselves. He has been misunderstood, he has been ridiculed, he has been persecuted, but above it all



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he has risen superior by the example of a life of strict honesty, great temperance and purity, and a very happy faculty of minding his own business.

So much so, that in many places in New England, the priest's name has been and is, as good as a cash payment of indebtedness, on one's note," a watchword for sobriety and purity and the name to express common sense and reserve. Nor am I exaggerating the case, when I call up before me the name of the great priests who made the beginnings of the Catholic Religion in New England. In after ages, when we are all dead and gone, men will look back at those days to say, as they read their history: "There were giants in those days."

The invasion from Ireland came at the time of the "Famine," at the middle of the nineteenth century, and has hardly ceased at the time I am writing. It made very little stir at first, for they were a hunted race, who had been ground down to the earth under the iron heels of two iniquitous institutions in their own fair Isle, — the Established Church (happily no more) and the Government.

They were poor, knowing little of farming, nothing of business and less of education, and

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yet, in half a hundred years, they and their descendants are tilling the soil, doing business, conducting manufactures, editing papers, sitting in the halls of legislative assemblies and occupying the highest offices in the gift of the people.

So we have seen the ugly bulbs placed in the ground in November's last warm days burst out into the gorgeous flower, after the winter has done its utmost to kill it.

It would be hard to find out the date of the Sunday when the town where Clarissa lived was blessed with its first Mass. But it was said in the house of Tom Reilly's father, in a little room where only a dozen might kneel and the rest, if any, could find a place in the kitchen or outside the door. The poor people, most of them fasting, many of them having walked from three to seven and often ten miles, bringing food and sometimes an infant with them for Baptism, are exchanging the good word, going to Confession in the parlor or bedroom where the Mass is to be said, and waiting patiently until the time when their hearts will rejoice at the advent of their King in this lowly place.

The Mass begins, the people kneel, and at last go up the "aisle" to receive. Then come the

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words of wisdom from the poor, tired man who looks for no reward on earth for his labors. He inspires them to be generous to the Church. He bids them be humble, sober, industrious, and withal to win a good opinion from their neighbors. Then, perhaps he takes them into his confidence a little, and tells them that the bishop is willing that they build a church. And, are they willing? Do they desire to have a House of God, which He can call His own?

Oh, how generously the hard earned dollars poured into his hands, and how fast the place that was but a desert, became a very garden of churches, schools and convents. It is the hearts of the poor, the souls of the despised, that, having been planted in adversity in New England, quickly took root and sprung up into rich hearts and souls, respected by every one who today comes into contact with the Irish American Catholic of New England.

So the little Church was built, to hold a couple of hundred people, and what a time they had to buy the land. It had to be bought by some one else, as if it were to be used for building a dwelling house. But bought it was finally, and one day the Bishop came to bless the church. It was not a very pretty church. No, with its four



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walls, square windows with curtains at them, the interior containing, besides the Altar, which was many times too large, only the Stations and pews, with the stove for the winter. The plaster was cracked and would fall down sometimes, the floor was warped and uneven, but there came the King of Kings, and there in His presence knelt the hidden saints, and there offered, month by month the Holy Sacrifice, the Godly man the people loved as their Father, and revered as their priest. There also, is the resting place for the dead, in which lie the bones of those who laid for us the foundation-stones on which we are building up the great structure.

We stand a moment in the old grass-grown cemetery, where lie their bodies waiting the Resurrection, and the memories of those whom we knew so well, come crowding upon us thick and fast. The boy we sat with in school, the girl who spelled us down that June day before the assembled town, the old woman on whose account our mother gave us a good whipping when we were about nine years old; the man who came to work for us, and with whom we would run part of the way home to hear his quaint old fairy stories. Yes, there they are, the children of the martyrs, the soldiers of the

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Army of the Lord who came not to conquer New England but to win it.

The earth rests over them and their souls daily rejoice before God, while they see us entering into the inheritance which they purchased with their lives and pious deaths.

At the time of our tale's beginning, Catholicity had made good progress in the town, owing to the large families the people had and also that they had been blessed with good priests to guide them, — and had thus avoided many of the pitfalls into which some of their fellows in larger places had fallen. Still, up to the time of our acquaintance with them, they had not very much influence, and few of them ever appeared at Town Meeting.

They lived each on a little piece of land which they hired, and worked out by the day or year, coming home every night. Their women took in washing and cultivated the little garden patch about the house, some of them going out to service. At a time previous to our story's opening the larger majority of domestic help was either Irish or of Irish extraction, and it is towards them that we must look with the greatest gratitude for the many fine churches and

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institutions which cover our land of New England.

Some of them were smiths and wheelwrights and made good livings and, being very careful and provident, are today well established in fine houses. Among the first comers there were many who were improvident and who spent all they earned as fast as it came. Families like these often died out, as they could not stand the harsh climate. But the race had settled down into a dominant race which, in another quarter of a century, will control the whole of the three southern states of the old New England province.

When we consider the circumstances under which they came, — exiles from home and oppressed as our forefathers had been, but more: deprived of all means of advancement not only for themselves but for the rich land which they were forced to leave, we are amazed at what they have done among us in fifty years, and to us it tells a story of what religion can do for a nation, when its citizens are left free to practice it.

In Clarissa's little town their influence had been furthered by some of the most respected



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citizens. One of them in Know-Nothing times had made a speech against the persecution of these people as being a method long out of practice and too barbarous to be revived. He had thrown into the fire a copy of Maria Monk's Book and had written a scorching letter to the publishers of it. All this had raised him very much in the estimation of the Irish. He had a profound contempt for the man who would insult an Irishman merely because of his race and religion, and had on one or two notable occasions raised his voice in protest. Perhaps his Fourth of July speech before the G. A. R. was the most remarkable of all.

"In the midst of the eulogy of the dead," he said, "I feel that it will not be out of place to speak here, and that I should be guilty of a crime of injustice to a large class of our fellow-citizens, if I did not speak here on a subject that will be distasteful only to the disloyal. As I today walked around this grand monument which we have just unveiled, I observed the names of sixty-three men who fell or died of disease in defense of the Union. Of these named, forty-nine are Irish names and the rest are the names of Yankees. I honor the name of the Irishman who laid down his life for his land.



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I thank here today, on behalf of those Yankee citizens of whom I am proud to be one, the fathers and mothers whose hearts, loyal to the land of their adoption, inspired these sons of theirs with patriotism. Not one of these Irish soldiers ever had a substitute, although some of them went as substitutes for some of our Yankees who were drafted. Over two thirds, then, of the blood that the town gave for the life of this nation is Irish blood. They deserve the nation's gratitude and thanks, and the day is not far distant when they will receive it. Men of Ireland, you come to us as a hunted and down-trodden people. You have proved yourselves brave in war, go forward in peace, and prove yourselves faithful and fortunate."

As such a speech could not make many friends among the Yankee people, whom he indirectly attacked, it did not make him any open enemies, for he was at that time the "richest man in town," and so even his enemies feared him.

Of course the Irish were wild with joy over it, and ever after men and children would pass him with some sign of respect. Their concourse in the Protestant cemetery at his funeral was a silent testimony of their gratitude. And the multitude of prayers that went up for his con-

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version; — ah, God alone knows how they tried to repay him with them.

The servant girls also had a good influence upon the non-Catholic portion of the people with whom they came in contact daily, and by their pure, sober and honest lives and by their aptitude to learn they gained the love of their mistresses, and more than once gained them to the faith. Their zeal for attending their church services was often the subject of very favorable comment from their mistresses, and of these Yankee matrons one bore witness:

“I always let my girls go to their church when they want to, they always do better work after coming back.”

But, on the other hand, race prejudice was rampant in both people, and while the Irishman looked askance at the Yankee with whom he had to live as being a sort of cousin to John Bull, — the Yankee himself for years avoided his brother from the Emerald Isle, until forced at last to associate with him or cease to have any society. Men like Mr. Lincoln were rare, but they had an immense influence for good over the prejudices of their neighbors.

“Feeling, at the time of the sermon spoken of in the last chapter, was running in an under-



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current, and, had it not been stirred up, everything would have come out all right. Catholics in the town had been divided, some were Democrats and some Republicans. If they had united solidly as Catholics against the rest, they could have held the balance of power and asked for what they liked, but they wanted a leader.

Now the busy-body of a preacher, Mr. Hawkins, had found out this fact and, professing to believe that they "would unite, to hold the town under the sway and thralldom of the priest," he had no more sense than to blurt it all out and to raise a disturbance.

But even when the Catholics did know the facts, they had no civil rights as Catholics to be defended at that time, and so they gave the lie to Mr. Hawkins and his statements by remaining staunch supporters of their respective parties.

But it is time we came back to Clarissa, to see something of her life and its cares.

CHAPTER VIII

Charity

SOME one, I know not who, has defined a "Gentleman" as: *one who is careful never to hurt another person's feelings.* And this quality of soul is necessary for one who wishes to practice charity to the poor and unfortunate, whom God has placed in the way before us Christians that we may relieve their wants.

The human heart knows its weaknesses, its bitternesses and its sore spots and, like the lame man deceived or like him who suffers from a vile cancer, it cannot receive the attention which imprudent people give to it nor be minded of its deception nor have the wound cauterized, without becoming a sufferer. And all souls shrink from suffering, for it is repugnant to human nature. Now, there is a class of people who delight in retailing conversation and pointing to the sufferings of their fellow-men. They will go so far as to exhibit them, if they are allowed to do so, as curiosities to a rude and gaping multitude. This custom prevails in



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certain places, and is called by the fictitious name of Charity. It is nothing but the beginning of a return to a system known as Clientage, which existed under the Romans, and it tends to breed and to raise up among us a class of paupers who can depend for their support on the rich whose behests they will be glad to carry out. Every man ought to be not only free to get his livelihood, but proud to do so. The man, able bodied and fit to work, who will consent to live at the expense of another or of the government under which he lives, is a contemptible creature and ought to be disfranchised.

It is noble to work. It is not degrading to handle the pick or shovel. Nor is the sleek and vulgar fellow who sometimes is seen standing over the "hands" always or often as much of a man as the laborer who toils for his hard-earned dollar a day. There is honest pride in bringing home what I have made by my efforts. It points me to another home-coming, when, with my sheaves garnered and bound up, I shall with pride take pleasure in surveying the results of my life work, in the home beyond the grave.

Charity is very different from the Philanthropy of our modern age, of which so much exists



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in certain quarters. It does not consist in giving, that is but part of it. If I meet a blear-eyed man on the street and give him a dime, I have not done an act of Charity. But if I should take that man and cure him of his evil habit, and give him a chance again to earn an honest living, and cover up his past so that no one will know anything about it, I have come so near to a charitable act that on the surface it cannot be seen where the difference lies. The root of Charity lies in this, that I do good to others because of the love of God. I love God. Then I will do good to all those whom he loves for the love I bear him.

Some years, perhaps nine or ten, before the death of Mrs. Lincoln, a certain person in the town conceived the idea of establishing a home for the aged poor. There was the regular poor house, but anyone can go there. So a "home" was established where "everyone" could not go. A large well built house was secured and paid for out of the estate of the late Mr. - - who left money in his will to trustees for this purpose. Then the "ladies of the town," undertook to furnish it, and went begging for it. They came, or rather two women came to Mr. Lincoln's one afternoon to ask for a subscription.

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They were as stiff and formal as they thought proper to the dignity of the undertaking they had in hand. They asked for Mr. Lincoln. When he appeared, they passed the usual introductory remarks about the weather and crops, and then one of them began:

"Mr. Lincoln, I suppose you heard about the "Home for the Aged?" that Mr. - - left the money for in his will?"

"Yes Mrs. Scatterer, I have. How is it getting on?" he replied.

"The Trustees have decided to buy the old Leeford Estate. There is a good house on it in good repair. And the "Ladies of the Town" have decided to furnish it. So we came to see if you would put down Clarissa's name for a subscription to it," she answered.

"Well," he said, "I will call Clarissa." When she came her father said to her:

"Clarissa, have you heard that the Ladies of the Town have decided to furnish the new "Home for the Aged" that is to be opened in town before long?"

"No, Father," she said. "I have heard nothing about it."

"Ah, — perhaps it would be more true for you to say that *certain* ladies of the town have

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decided that *all the rest* shall furnish the Home for the Aged."

"Mr. Lincoln, do you wish to insult us?"

"O no. Certainly not. But my daughter is not one of the ladies of the town, and I do not think you nor your committee have any exclusive right to call themselves so. No, — please wait one moment before you go. I would give you a large sum money to help you, but this institution bears a lie on its name. It is not a Home for the Aged of This Town, — it is a Home for the Protestant Aged, and, in the deed of trust there stands the clause: *No Irish need apply*. If there were any real charity in the heart of the man who left the gift, he would have remembered that Christ died for the Irish as well as for the Protestants. I will give nothing to this institution, unless its doors are opened to this other class who are now excluded. I wish you a very good afternoon, ladies."

The "Ladies" got up and left, but not until they had heard him out. When they were gone, he said to Clarissa:

"I do not think that you needed that lesson, but I wanted you to be there when I gave it to them. They will not ask you for anything now," said her father.

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"O father," replied Clarissa, "I would not help such a place for anything. I feel like going to the extreme and helping Irish people exclusively after this."

"No, my daughter, do not ever go to such lengths as that. Let your charity be for all men that are made after God's likeness."

When the weekly paper appeared that Friday, there was the list of subscribers published, to the fund for furnishing the house. And how they did hug themselves, when they saw their names in print. And how angry one of them was because her name was left out, and how curt a note she wrote to the committee. And how the letter of apology in next week's edition healed the vanity that had been piqued. How they criticised and tore to pieces the various donations. How this one was mean and stingy, and that one made such a display and did not give much after all, and another could not give as much as she would like because her husband would not let her. All these and more tell how vanity was partially satisfied, and that the devil was well pleased with the subscription list.

The ignorance of the Bible by some of those who profess to depend on it for their religion is alarming for religion. For they know *next to*

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nothing about it, and, if we judge them by their profession, we shall have to say *nothing about their religion*. But Clarissa, following in the footsteps of a Bible-reading family, was saturated with it. One of her favorite books was that of Tobias, and she made it part of her rule in her works of charity in which she had been engaged ever since her mother died. She never offended people by helping them, for they felt as if they had done her a favor to let her assist them, after she had finished her charitable administration. She usually won the hearts of the poor by the children, not by candies and sweetmeats merely, but by stories and "takings-up" on her knee, by showing things, and by teaching them to do little things which please children and warm their innocent hearts to one.

Through them she would find her way into the houses of the poor, and once there she knew a hundred things to do and be done that they had no idea of.

She taught them how to relieve their own poverty by saving many useful things which might be thrown away, and by doing things in a more economical manner than they had been in the habit of doing them. She often had them come up "to help" her, and profited by their

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presence in her house to teach them many a lesson. So, when the poor said she was a friend to them indeed and that she valued their friendship also, — she could do about as she liked with them afterwards. She loved to take care of the sick mothers, to lend them clothes for the new baby when its day came to be carried to the church for Baptism, and they were glad to let her “dress the baby” for that Sacrament, for they saw how much it pleased her, and no one ever heard about it.

Clarissa never talked about her good deeds, nor did she advertise them in the papers. Her charity was done in secret, and she only called it help. She would say to her father:

“Father, I guess I will go over to the Sweeney’s and help them a little.” Then, putting on her old clothes, she would take a basket of odds and ends for lunch; — not a miserable mess of left over food but real good, untouched food. Once there, she would begin without ever asking permission to help, telling the tired mother that she would mind the children for a while. Later she would take a hand at the wash tub, or offer to get the dinner. Then she would clean up afterwards and make the house more tidy than it had been, and have a long talk about

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“things in Ireland.” At such times, when they confided to her some of the troubles they had there, she was very indignant that such things should be and let them know it, and a bond grew up between them that was never to be sundered.

When she came to leave the place in the afternoon, she would say to the mother:

“Now, you let Mary and John come up and spend the day with me next week if it is pleasant. Let them come early and stay all day, for I am a lonely old woman and want young people’s company.”

And it was wonderful to see how when they came, Clarissa showed so many things to them, for she would tell the girl a half hundred common things that help in keeping house; such as cooking, sewing and preparing the food. Then perhaps after dinner she would show Johnnie about the barns, and tell him about the cows and pigs and horses, and how to be kind to them, and Johnnie would see her on the colt, riding round as if he were a tame horse, and learn the secret of all her success — kindness. Then she would play the harmonium for them and sing, and encourage them to sing, and the old house would echo with Catholic Hymns or Irish airs. And when they came home in the evening and

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told of the simplicity of Clarissa's heart; of her kindness, and showed by their tale of the day's enjoyment, that her motive in having the children was inspired by real love for them, the parents put aside all suspicion and were glad to have their children with her often, for the relief it brought them.

"Then Mr. Sam Lincoln is a Catholic," they would say, and the children learned to love him too, during his short stay, and they were never tired of hearing about the "war" and the Indians of the West. One of the men who used to haunt the grocery store on winter nights, was named Phineas Slab. He was a prime mover in the A. P. A. councils. The day that Sam came home to Clarissa he had seen and recognized him coming out of the Catholic Church, and as he had been known to go into the priest's house half an hour before it, the old lady who spent her days watching at her window to get food for gossip, concluded rightly that he was a Catholic. That night in the store Mr. Slab said:

"Well I guess I've got the greatest piece of news tonight, you've heard in a long time."

"What is it Phin?" asked Luke Hastings.

"Why, Sam Lincoln came home today," said he.

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“Ho!” said Lou Kingsbury, “that ain’t news, everyone in town seen him. You’ll have to tell us something else.”

“Wa’al, I will. He’s turned Catholic,” said Phineas.

“You get out! How’d you know?” asked Luke.

“Wa’al, my woman, she seed him a-goin’ into the priest’s house about ten this morning, and ’twas about ten and a half when she seen him a-comin’ out of the Catholic meeting house.”

“Wa’al, wa’al, I wanter know,” went the round of the circle of gossips.

“She wuz so ’xcited, she couldn’t hardly wait fur me to come home to dinner to tell me. She says to me: ‘You depend upon it, Phineas Slab, thet’s the reason he didn’t never come back from the war, becuz he turned Catholic. If Clarissa’s got any grit in her, she’ll turn him out of doors.’ My old woman, she’s pretty bright still, and she’s right fast enough.”

“Wa’al,” said Mr. Dyer, “Clarissa’s got grit enough, but she hain’t got that dirty kind of grit you talk about. That’s more like manure than grit. She won’t turn around on her own flesh and blood just because he’s a Catholic. If he goes up there, she’ll take him in and make a

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big fuss over him, I can tell you. I guess I'll go up there in a day or two myself and see him. Him and I was boys together."

"Wa'al, Mr. Dyer, you ketch a man up so sudden. 'Twa'ant me that said it, 'twas my wife," said Phineas.

"Wa'al, Mr. Slab, your wife's folks was Catholics only as far back as her grandmother. And her maiden name was Murphy. Thet's Catholic and Irish, and she ought not to say things against them like that." Phineas Slab subsided, and the gossip of the store continued until poor Sam Lincoln was cut up, laid out and packed away as a parcel, to be opened at some other convenient day when the gossips chose.

The following morning Mrs. Slab told Phin the result of a call she had made to Clarissa that same afternoon. "I found her mending men's clothes," she said, and so says I to her, "Be you working for the Missionary Box, Miss Lincoln?" I knew she wa'ant. And she says: 'Wa'al, Mrs. Slab, do you think these things would come in handy for it?' I says, 'of course I do,' 'nd she kinder snikkered and said she thought so too. But 'twas just as plain as day thet she was workin' for her brother Sam. I couldn't see no signs of him nowhere. His hat

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wa'ant a-hangin' up, an' there wa'ant no men's clothes 'round 'cept them she was workin' on. She didn't say nothin' 'baout there bein' anyone else in the house, 'nd so I come home. But he's there fast enough, 'nd she's goin' to care fur him. Wa'al, I wouldn't do it fur nobody thet turned Catholic. Let 'im stay away."

Phin had it all over that night at the grocery store. He never learned enough wisdom to keep his mouth shut and old Mr. Shephard, who never went to church, said:

"Now, Mr. Slab, I ain't a Christian, but I can tell you something about them. The Bible, which your "professors" are always talking about, tells a story of how a man's son ran away from home, don't it?"

"I d'no. I guess so," answered Phineas.

"Well, it does. And if Mr. Warren will get me a Bible for a moment, I'll read it to you." The Bible was brought and the parable of the Prodigal Son was read out. Then Mr. Shephard laid down the book and said:

"Now, that Father didn't ask his son anything about what he had been, nor if he was a Catholic or a Jew. When he saw him, he fell on his neck and kissed him and killed the fatted calf. And I know the whole Lincoln family,

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and Clarissa will kill the fatted calf, for she's a true Christian. If there were more Christians like her, and less like you, Mr. Slab, I'd go to church sometimes. Humph!" And Mr. Shephard took a pinch of snuff. Mr. Phineas Slab departed shortly afterwards to attend to a meeting of the A. P. A. How he happened to fall in a puddle of muddy water as he was crossing the street, a couple of boys who were convulsed with laughter could have told him, but he never knew, for it was dark. His shrewish wife gave him a lecture when he came home, for the appearance of his soiled clothes, but he was meek enough in her presence and never attempted to excuse himself. But he did not go to the A. P. A. meeting that night and had to pay ten cents fine.

Thus Clarissa's good name was known and loved by all, except the few fanatics and bigots, who care only for themselves and everything that is unlovely. For Clarissa's heart went out beyond itself to all about her, nor could she harbor an evil thought of anyone. She was always making excuses for people, even trying to invent one, where the case seemed almost a hopeless one. The "Sermon on the Mount" or the "Eight Beatitudes" as we Catholics call them,

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were ever in her mind when she had to listen to the uncharitable gossip of some of her callers. And she had offended one or two gossips and busybodies by saying:

“Well really, I have so much to do here at home, that I never stop to think whether other people are doing wrong or not. I am sorry if they are and if I knew it, I would not tell anyone about it for the world.” Neither did she make this remark from vanity, but so she had been brought up, and then, she read her Bible. Clarissa had little of that quality which is called “human respect.” She did what she thought was right, and if the world at large did not like it, she did not care for the opinion of the world, for she stood by her own conscience in the matter. While she often shocked the unreasonable prejudices of many people, she did not do it merely for that purpose. For no one could ever accuse her of trying to show off.

That night after her brother’s funeral, the Angel of the Judgment opened his great book, and what he wrote therein was what everyone of us would gladly see put down to our credit in our books at the last great day.

“Charity covers a multitude of sins.” “Alms redeem the soul from death. Give alms of thy



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goodness and never turn thy face from the poor man, and then the face of the Lord shall never be turned from thee."

Dear old Clarissa, you may be a Protestant old maid, but you have a soul dear to God's friends, the poor.

CHAPTER IX

One Man's Example

FATHER McSorely is said to have made the remark that, so far as he was concerned, he would like it well if half a dozen sermons were preached against the Catholic Church. For he said that it would make better Catholics out of his people and set non-Catholics to thinking, — two things certain, in any case, to be beneficial to the Church and, in this case, productive of the most remarkable results.

The congregation of the little Episcopal Church was very "High," and, although small, it made up by talk and noise for its size. One of its most zealous members had been a young man by the name of Crossman, who was born and brought up in the town but had joined the Episcopalian Church when he was a boy. He went in for candles and vestments and all the Catholic paraphernalia that these people adopt in their services, but, unfortunately for the Episcopalians, and unlike most of them, he went in for Catholic doctrine also, and this ended in his becoming a Catholic. This event had taken

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place about five years before the death of Clarissa's father, and during the summer Father Crossman had come home to visit his family. His father was not a church member, but was the principal supporter of the church where he had his pew and where he had listened for years to Mr. Atwood, whose preaching he had always admired. He would never "join the church," for he said:

"I can't subscribe to the articles of any of your churches; for, as I read my Bible, all of you disagree with me somewhere." So he was a church-goer, if not a church member. As may be supposed, he was not a bigot, and when Phineas Slab said, at the time of Father Crossman's conversion,

"His father will disown him," Mr. Crossman, on hearing of it, said: "Does he take me for a fool?"

On the day of the anti-Catholic sermon, Mr. Hawkins had denounced priests as immoral and living in crime under the guise of celibacy. When it was all over, Mr. Crossman went home, and, once there, he took his wife apart and said to her:

"Katie, you heard all that was said today. It



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reflects on our flesh and blood. As for me, I shall never enter that church again. I have been going there for your sake, as you know. If it had not been for you, I'd have gone nowhere. If you choose to go there after this, I shall be sorry, but will not object."

"I feel it as much as you do, my dear husband," she replied, "nor do I wish to go to the old place again, as long as Mr. Hawkins preaches there. But we must go somewhere, and where shall it be?"

"I will think it over and tell you before Sunday," said Mr. Crossman.

Mr. Crossman was a business man who went to the city every day in the train. Monday morning as he was walking up and down the platform at the station, Mr. Hawkins accosted him:

"Fine morning, Mr. Crossman."

"Yes, sir," he replied with asperity, and added: "In the future, sir, please address all your remarks to me from your pulpit. Good morning, sir," and he turned on his heel and walked to a knot of little boys who were waiting for the papers and became very much interested in their affairs. Hawkins did not say any-



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thing but he understood that a large supply of cash would now be withdrawn, and he set his sallow wits to work to find some one ready to fill his coffers.

When Mr. Crossman reached the city and had disposed of the most important part of his business, he called up his son on the telephone and told him of the attack that had been made and what he had said to Mrs. Crossman about it. He asked his son's advice on the matter and told him of the interview with Mr. Hawkins. Father Crossman saw in this the hand of God and determined at once to begin work anew for his father's conversion. So he said over the telephone:

"I think you have done wisely so far, but do not talk to anyone about it. I will write you a letter today or tomorrow and tell you just what I think proper to do under the circumstances."

The letter came. It was short and to the point. Here it is:

My dear Father and Mother:

I am sorry to hear of the difficult position in which you are placed. You will come out of it all right. I would ask you, in order that you may refute the charges you have heard, to read and study carefully the books I am sending you

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by this mail. Is not this an opportune time to do what I have often asked you to do, namely, —investigate the claims of the Catholic Church?

With love to all the others in the family, I remain

Yours affectionately,

Francis Crossman.

“Well, Katie,” said Mr. Crossman when they had both read the letter, “we do not know anything about Frank’s church except what we know from its enemies. And don’t you think we can trust Frank enough to do what he asks? He is our only boy, you know, and I think we might please him in this matter. What is your opinion?”

“Why, James,” she said, “I will go where you lead. I could not go to a church where you did not go, and even if you should make up your mind to go to the Catholic Church, I should go with you.”

“Very well, Katie. When Sunday comes, we shall see.”

On Friday there came quite a parcel by express. It contained a copy of “Questions of the Soul,” by Hecker; “Plain Facts for Fair Minds,” by Searle; “Mass Book for Non-Catholics,” six copies, and a number of leaflets on

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the Sacraments, the Pope, and Purgatory; and several Catechisms. It was a quiet evening, that Friday, when all the family were gathered around, deep in some book or another that "Brother Frank" had sent. And "Frank," he was in his Church in New York giving Benediction, for it was the First Friday in the month. And as he lifted high the Lord, to bless, he saw his parents and his sisters many miles away, and he asked the Lord to bless them also.

At that moment Mr. Crossman rose rather suddenly from the book he had been reading for an hour past, and said that he had to go out for a while, down town.

As soon as he reached the village, he went straight up to the priest's house. The Church was lighted for devotions, and Mr. Crossman went in and took a seat in the back. What was going on there he did not know, but it was all very interesting. At last, when Father McSorely turned to his people with something in his hands that looked like a gold cross and held it up among clouds of incense, Mr. Crossman found himself on his knees. How he came there he did not know, but not until the bell had ceased and the music had begun did he seem to

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have the power to rise. After it was over he hastened out and went to the house of Father McSorely, who came at once when he heard who his visitor was. He did not wait for any introductory remarks but began:

"Father McSorely, I had to come up here to-night to tell you that I am going to become a Catholic, if you will undertake to instruct me as to the duties which bind me. I have been reading a little lately and I am convinced that the Catholic Church is the only True Church; but I do not know enough about it to be a good member."

Father McSorely was well enough pleased and not a little surprised, for that evening's mail had brought him a letter from Father Crossman telling of his Father's state of mind and asking his prayers. So it happened that in the two Churches that evening the same "Intention for the Sacred Heart" was read out: "*For the conversion of a family to the faith.*"

"Answers come quickly to some people," thought Father McSorely to himself, and he said to Mr. Crossman:

"I shall be happy to help you, indeed. But we must begin at the beginning of things, — with the catechism. I will get one and explain a

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little of it tonight, and you can take it with you."

"Well, Father McSorely, I received a package of Catholic books from my son this evening, and I left all the rest of the family deep in them at home. There are catechisms among them, I think, but I will take this one home. Now, when shall I come again?"

"When can you come?" he asked.

"I can come any evening at all," Mr. Crossman answered.

"Well, tomorrow night I have Confessions but I can see you after supper for half an hour. And on Sunday, as it is a "Day of Rest," I am always very busy. Monday, then. Will that suit you?" asked the zealous priest.

"O yes. And now there is something else. My wife and I have made up our minds not to go to the Orthodox Church any more. But, we must go somewhere. Can you give us a pew in your church?" So it was arranged that Mr. Crossman was to rent a pew and conform to the customs of the Catholic Church in standing, sitting and kneeling during the services.

"Now, Father McSorely, I do not want my son to know of this at present. So, if you write him, do not mention anything more than the

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great fact that everybody knows, — that I do not go to the Orthodox Church any more.”

On Sunday Mr. Crossman was ready and every one of the family walked through the town, past the old place where they had attended church for so many years, and up to the little Catholic Church. The news had spread to all who were gathered about the door, for the usher in charge of the pew book had seen Mr. Crossman's name as holding No. 120. So hats were doffed and smiles were given. After Mass was over our friend Tom Reilly walked up and shook hands with Mr. Crossman, and there was a general hand-shaking afterwards.

The sermon was a very instructive one, — on the “*Necessity of a Visible Infallible Teaching Authority in Religious Matters*.” The priest showed the necessity of Faith and Good Works, and then showed that in order to find out what *Faith* is and what *Good Works* are, we must be taught by Almighty God, in such a way that there can be no possibility of error.

The whole family had their little Mass books for Non-Catholics, and followed everything with great attention and devotion. This pleased the Catholic portion of the congregation, some of whom had doubts and strange feelings when

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they saw "Yankees" coming in by the whole-sale. But after two Sundays no one took any notice of the Crossman family, any more than if they were Catholics.

In the Grocery Store on Monday night there was the biggest crowd yet. Everyone wanted to hear what would be said about the sensation of Sunday morning.

"Wa'al," said Phineas Slab, who was again in evidence in spite of repeated snubs, "the hull Crossman family was at the Catholic Meetin' yesterday. I seen 'em, and my wife she seen 'em, the hull lot on 'em. And they jest walked up there as if they had bought the hull place. Mr. Crossman he hain't got no religion 'tall. But Mrs. Crossman, why, she's been a 'Purfesser' for nigh onto thirty-seven years. I'd think she'd know better than that."

"There you go again, Phin Slab, jest as if nobody had any rights but you Orthodox folks. Why, Mr. Crossman has got more religion in his little toe than you hev in your whole body. He's been to your church for years because his wife went there. And he's paid most all the minister's salary, too, for the last two years. So, naow, if you are going to say he hain't got

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no religion, I'll 'gree with you, if you mean of the same kind you've got," said Mr. Dyer.

"Well, what does he want to go to the Irish Church for? Why didn't he go to the 'Piscopal?" said Slab.

"There are some people who would break up a funeral procession, if they couldn't drive the hearse," replied Mr. Dyer sententiously.

"Irish?" said Tom Reilly, coming in just before that last remark of poor Phineas. "What is wrong with us now?"

"O," said Mr. Shephard, "Mr. Slab objects to having Mr. Crossman go to the Catholic Church."

"Well, I'm thinking, if it keeps on as it has begun, it's not an Irish Church at all it will be. It'll be a Yankee Catholic Church, and the poor Irish won't be in it," laughed Tom.

"So it's true, is it, that Mr. Crossman and his family attended your Church, Mr. Reilly?" asked Mr. Dyer.

"Why, yes, I saw them there at last Mass," said he.

"I wonder what the Orthodox folks will do now?" said Mr. Dyer. "Phin, how are you going to pay to run the church, if Mr. Crossman leaves you?" he continued.

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“Wa’ll, I guess Mr. Hawkins can raise money enough to live on. Mr. Crossman didn’t do such an awful lot, after all,” replied Phin.

“Ho! He didn’t, eh?” said Mr. Dyer. “Wa’ll, we’ll see. I reckon you’ll hev to shet up. I hear that Miss Clarissa Lincoln wa’ant to your meetin’ yesterday, neither. Maria Grout, who’s a ’Piscopal, says she came to their church. Guess that sermon agin’ Catholics did ’em more good than harm. And besides you know Miss Lincoln’s brother was a Catholic, and was buried in the Catholic cemetery. And Miss Lincoln, she’s always goin’ about visiting the Catholic folk when they are sick. ’Twould be funny if she’d turn Catholic, too.”

“Wa’ll, if all you folks and the hull town is goin’ to turn Catholic, I’ll jest leave town,” said Phin.

“You wouldn’t be missed much, Phin,” said Jim Grout, who had done a good week’s work for him three years before and had never been paid.

All that week Mr. Crossman, his wife and three daughters received instructions at Mr. Crossman’s house in the evenings. Not one of them but went straight towards the Church, surmounting all the difficulties in the way, —

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and they were not a few. All day long the children studied Catechism and read the books of Instruction, and nearly pestered the life out of "Old Mary the Cook" in the kitchen. But she was good-natured, and it was from her they learned to say the Rosary, which Mr. Crossman had said by the family every night afterwards. They stole her prayer book away, and when she wanted it, it was being read by some one in the parlor, until one evening Mr. Crossman came home with a large package.

"Today," said he, "I went into a Catholic Book Store and asked them to furnish me with whatever a good Catholic family ought to have. I brought all I could and the rest will soon be here by express." Then he unpacked his parcels, and there was a prayer book and a rosary for each, and a crucifix also, with two fine pictures of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the Sorrowful Mother. When he displayed all these things, he said to his children: "I am determined to become a Catholic like Frank; and so is your mother. Now, my daughters, what are you going to do?"

They all said they were going to do the same, and when Father McSorely came that night, Mr. Crossman told him that all of his family had made up their minds to become Catholics. This

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was some six weeks after they had begun taking instructions from Father McSorely, and they were now not only ready but anxious to be received into the Church. Mr. Crossman had some notion that the reception would take place publicly, but Father McSorely was not favorable to such a plan; so he proposed this:

“There is excitement and bad feeling now among certain ones in the community and we must not do anything to arouse any more of it. Now, Mr. Crossman, I have a plan for your reception which I am sure will please you. The Holidays are not yet passed. Why not take a trip to New York to see your son? Take the family along, and you can be received there and make your First Communion there, and all without stirring up any more disturbance here among your A. P. A. neighbors.”

“Yes, Father!” shouted the three girls, “and Frank will baptize us himself.”

So it was arranged, and they left for New York two days later with a note from Father McSorely as follows:

My Dear Father Crossman:

This note will introduce you to five persons of my acquaintance who wish to be received into the Church. They are ready. I instructed



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them all myself for Baptism, Confession, Confirmation and First Communion. Trusting you will be pleased with my work, I remain

Yours in Christ,

Thomas A. McSorely.

Mr. Crossman sent the note upstairs to his son as soon as he was, with his wife and children, safe inside the priest's house. Who can paint the joy of Father Crossman when the mystery of the note was explained by the sight of all his family on their knees to ask for his blessing as he entered the room? The following day they received the three Sacraments, of Baptism, Penance and Holy Communion, and all made profession of their faith. The next morning they went to the Cathedral near by and the Archbishop gave them all Confirmation, assisted by Father Crossman. They remained in New York over Sunday, and came away with sentiments that cannot be expressed in human language.

The facts leaked out, of course, for the girls had their friends who must hear all about it. But by this time the people had become accustomed to the Crossmans' going to the Catholic Church, so there was but little gossip.

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Just before the beginning of Lent, Father McSorely met one of the gentlemen who had called on him after Mr. Hawkins' sermon to protest, and said to him:

"Mr. Green, I think I am ready now for a reply to some of Mr. Hawkins' attacks on the Catholic Church, and I am come now to ask a little assistance."

"Well, Father McSorely, I'll do whatever I can,— what do you want?"

"I want your hall every night for a week, Sundays included," said he.

"You shall have it. When is it to be?" asked Mr. Green.

"In two weeks. I have engaged two lecturers from Boston, and they will speak on subjects interesting to non-Catholics and answer all questions from the platform," replied Father McSorely.

"Very well, Father, I will make a note of the dates in my book," and he departed.

There was great enjoyment now among the angels of that little town and much of earnest prayer. Father McSorely had stirred up his people to pray, — and angels of people, families, Church, and the whole region round about had been exceedingly busy with the delightful work



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of presenting the petitions of their charges to God.

The angel of the Crossman family, coming across the angel of Clarissa, had said:

“I have just taken a whole host of prayers to heaven for the good girl you have in charge. We shall have her safe in a little while.” Then they all sang together the Hail Mary, and joyfully went each one to his work.

CHAPTER X

Winter Studies

A LONG New England evening is of all times the best for doing good work of any kind, and Grace Buckminster and Clarissa had always pursued together some course of reading or study during that period of the year, from the time they had left High School.

They had learned Latin and Greek, and were familiar with classical authors in those languages, and for seven or eight winters twice a week used to meet at one or other of their houses for reading. Later they had taken up the theory of Botany in the winter time and had practically studied it in the spring, summer and autumn months. Then for several winters they had studied Eastern religions and had learned to read French and German as an aid to those studies. When this winter came on, Clarissa felt that the one thing above all others she would like to study was the Catholic Religion, but just at the opening of the winter she was too



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much disturbed to speak to her friend of the matter.

An old New England winter, when the snow lies deep outside, and the frost is heavy on the window panes and the house is warm and pleasant, has memories very dear to one who could enjoy the sleighing parties and the coasting and skating. Clarissa had known some of these sports, but she was of a quieter nature and earlier than most young girls took to staying home of an evening. Not but what she could enjoy the fun of the ride in the great barge with its four horses, and Joe Moore driving to the Old Inn across the Sadbury Meadows; and the hot oyster-suppers on their arrival; and then the dance, when Jimmie McPherson played the violin and "called off" amid shouts of laughter in the dance hall, for two or three hours; and then the hot supper again, and the ride home in the moonlight, singing and telling stories and playing jokes until home was reached early, at eleven o'clock, — and all was over before midnight. But Clarissa could never be persuaded to go again. They might be all right for others, — these things, "but I can employ my time to better advantage and get more happiness out of it," was her conclusion after thinking it over.

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So could she spend an evening reading Pliny's letter to Trajan or one of Cicero's treatises with keen enjoyment, and have more happiness than all the fleeting pleasures of the world can give.

Some weeks before Christmas she walked over to see her friend, Grace Buckminster, who lived near by, in order to have some conversation about what they should do for the winter.

"Grace", she said, "what are we going to study this winter?" Have you thought anything about it?"

"Yes, Clarissa, I have thought about it, and I can't get the thought out of my head. You know what a lot of trash we waded through to find out the falsity of the religions of the East?"

"Of course. Well, do you propose studying religion again?" replied Clarissa.

"I can't get this one thought out of my mind, Clarissa Lincoln, that we do not know anything at all about the Roman Catholic Religion, and we ought to."

"Well, I have no objections at all to studying it with you," said Clarissa.

"But," replied her friend, "we shall find it

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all superstition, I suppose, and only have the satisfaction of knowing all about it."

"Perhaps," said Clarissa sententiously; "but as it is professed by so many educated and cultured people, we may find something more in it than we imagine. Suppose it should turn out not to be all trash and superstition, but rational and plainly true? Would that be an agreeable change for the result of our studies, or would it not? But then, such a thing can't be, and so we can engage in our study safely."

"Well, Clarissa, I'm as old as you are, and an old maid too. I'm independent enough, I guess. So, if our studies on the Catholic Religion lead us to believe it to be true, then I'll turn Catholic."

"You know my poor brother who died in the fall was a Catholic. I never would talk religion to him, nor let him speak of it to me. But a day or two before he died he said to me: 'Clarissa, what a pity you are not a Catholic. If you only knew what the Catholic Religion is, you would become a Catholic at once and wish you had been one all your life.' Then he said: 'I am near my end, Clarissa, and I want you to promise me one thing. Promise me that when I am gone you will study the Catholic Religion thor-

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oughly.' And I promised.'" Drying her eyes, she continued:

"And Grace, I came out here this afternoon to ask you if you would take up this study with me, and here I find you thinking of the same thing. How did you happen to think of it?"

"Well," said Grace, "I'll tell you. Do you remember last Sunday, how Mr. Hawkins, in the long prayer, asked God to enlighten the pagans and the poor benighted Romanists?"

"I must have been wandering, for I have no recollection of it," said Clarissa.

"Well, he did," said Grace, "use just those words. And I have been saying to myself every day since that I am as much in the dark about them as they are about us. Moreover, I was thinking of coming to your house today myself, to ask you about studying the Catholic Religion this winter."

"But, do you suppose there is any one in town who can tell us what books to get, except the priest, Grace?"

"No. I suppose not. But we can manage that. You know him, do you not?" said Grace.

"No, — I drove the horse and sleigh when I took him to old Mrs. Egan when she died. And he came to our house when Sam was sick. But

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I never had much to say to him. No, I do not know him."

"Well, I'll come over tomorrow and see you, and we will finish our arrangements about it then. Here come the cows, and I've got to be at work," said Grace.

"Grace," said Clarissa the next day, as they sat each at work before the fire, where Jumbo reposed in state on his mat, "I am thinking there are some hard nuts for you to crack, in this investigation of the Catholic Religion. We were taught to believe them ignorant and wishing to keep every one in ignorance."

"So we were," said Grace.

"But, Grace, it was a Catholic Pope who introduced the Arabic Numerals into Europe; and Catholic monks and nuns who must have copied all the manuscripts of the Bible before a Catholic invented printing; and it was a Catholic who invented the compass, and organs, and modern music, and Gothic Architecture, and gunpowder. Copernicus was a Catholic Priest, and Louis Pasteur was a Catholic, and so is the man who invented the X-Rays. We have lost the art of making stained glass as fine as theirs, and all the knowledge we have of agriculture was possessed by the monks of the middle age.

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Albert the Great used the inductive method in his reasoning and antedates Bacon a couple of centuries and more; even Professor Agassiz admits this. Why, now I think of it, all the great discoverers of this new world have been Catholics and, in the face of it all, — we have the assurance to call Catholics ignorant and wishing to keep all men in ignorance.”

“Every word you say is true, but not new to me. However, I never thought of these things in this way, nor did it ever strike me, as I read of the invention of printing, for instance, that there were no Protestants then, and if the Church had really wished to suppress learning, it might easily have done so. But the nuns in their convents were the first printers in a great many places. Clarissa, there is a whole winter’s work in the little speech you just made,” said Grace.

“I am aware of it. But these things are all beside the mark. The real question is: Does the Catholic Religion teach a true doctrine, and what is it?

“If it is false, then who can explain many things is history? If it be true, there must be some explanations for many other things in history. So we will investigate together.”

* * *

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"Grace," said Clarissa the next time that they met, "I have not done a thing yet about getting any books for our studies this winter, but I have come to some remarkable conclusions. I have been doing some thinking for the past three days, and now I want to see if I cannot find the same thoughts in you. So I will be Socrates, and you be the disciple."

"Well, there is nothing I would enjoy more, Clarissa, so begin at once with your questions, and I will not hesitate to take you up if you give me an opportunity."

"Very well, Grace. You believe in God?"

"Certainly I do."

"And you have sufficient evidence to believe that He has made a revelation?"

"I have, Clarissa."

"Can this revelation, then, be divided into two parts, each distinct, yet necessary, and one depending on the other?"

"If you mean that revelation concerns belief and moral action, of course I must admit that," said Grace.

"What is the purpose of revelation, then?" Clarissa asked.

"To show us the way of salvation," and



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Grace smiled, for she saw where Clarissa was going.

"Salvation, then, being the end and destiny of man, revelation shows how to attain it, does it?" asked Clarissa.

"Of course it does," answered Grace.

"Who can tell us exactly what it is?"

"No one but God," said Grace.

"Now, Grace," said Clarissa, "if God is the author of revelation, what sort of a one must he be, if He has hidden it from men, or made it so difficult to get at that most men will give up the search for it when told where it is? Is He not like the wicked Sultan who sent Prince Ahmed for the waters of the Fountains of Lions?"

"Worse," said Grace.

"But, have we not been taught that the Bible, and the Bible only, is the revelation of God?" said Clarissa.

"Yes, it is true," answered Grace, "that so we have been taught by our parents."

"But on what authority do we take the Bible?" she said.

"I suppose I have always taken it on human authority," answered Grace.

"That is true. But if the Bible is the word

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of God, ought I not to have God's authority for it?" asked Clarissa.

"Certainly, and no less an authority will do," cried Grace.

"Well now, Grace, what do you conclude from this?" was Clarissa's question.

"Only this: That I must try to find some divine authority for the Bible," answered Grace.

"Let me give you a hint, Grace. There were no Bibles in the world until Moses, and he wrote only five books. The world was 2500 years with a true religion, and two things necessary: to believe right and to do right. How did they learn the way of salvation without a Bible?"

"Well, they must have had teachers," said Grace.

"But what authority had they?" asked Clarissa.

"Well, — Adam, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and many others had the authority of God, for he certainly did appear to them," said Grace.

"Do you think we go too far that the teachers who came after them had the same divine authority?" asked Clarissa.

"Not considering the exigencies of the case and the circumstances. And when we remem-

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ber that the Jewish High Priest was the supreme teacher for the Jews, he was certainly constituted such by divine authority, to remain such until the coming of Christ."

"Well, Grace, do you see where we are landed now?" asked Clarissa.

"Do you mean that this is the Roman Catholic position?" said Grace.

"That is just what it is," said her friend.

"I think they claim more than this, Clarissa," said Grace. "Do they not claim infallibility in all matters where they teach at all? Have you not to believe in all their miracles, liquefactions of blood, etc?"

"I think not, Grace," said Clarissa.

"How can we find out, then, unless we go to the authorities? Suppose we go to Boston next week, and find out a place where they sell Catholic books, and get what we want?" suggested Grace.

"I can go on Tuesday," replied Clarissa.

"That will suit me first rate, Clarissa, and I will meet you at the station."

The next Sunday was the Sunday of the famous sermon and Clarissa and Grace had a quiet talk about it on the way to Boston.

"Now, leaving out all the abuse which he

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heaped on the Catholics, Clarissa," said Grace Buckminster, "what did he say in support of Protestantism that was remarkable? Do you remember any argument that he proposed? Everything was mere assertion with plenty of rhetoric, but there was not one argument with any position he took. 'The Bible is the word of God.' Well, did he make it out to be so? He did not. He asserted it as if it was as plain as two and two make four, and that was all he did. Then he spoke of Protestantism and all it had done for the world. But he never told the people that Protestantism was one thing in 1530 and another in 1901; or that the Protestantism that he holds, and yours and mine, if we have any left, is quite different. Really, Clarissa, if I ever felt ashamed of my church, it was Sunday morning. I shall not go there again, while he is in charge."

"Grace, — not only am I not going there again, but if I ever go to church regularly anywhere, it will be to the Catholic Church," said Clarissa.

"Why not try the Episcopal Church for a while?" suggested Grace to her friend.

"If I understand Episcopalians right, they are trying to be Catholics without the pope,

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who is the keystone of the arch of the Catholic Religion. However, it won't hurt to go there once or twice, and hear what they have to say for themselves. But, this I feel sure of: If there is one religion in the world that has a good, fair chance to prove that it is divine, and can teach with divine authority those things that concern my salvation and are revealed by God, it is the Catholic."

"Ought you not, then, to become a Catholic at once?" said Grace.

"One might think so. But the Catholic Religion has not yet proved to me that it is right, has it? Well, then, I cannot join it yet. But, as soon as I know it is true, I shall be a Catholic."

In the ardor of this conversation, they had not noticed an old man with a white beard, just in front of them, who was listening to all they said. He now turned, and touching his hat, said:

"I beg pardon, ladies, for speaking, but I could not help hearing all you have been saying since you came on the train. And, as I am a Catholic, and a convert myself, perhaps I can give you a little advice or some information that may be of use to you in your investigation of the Catholic Religion."

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"We thank you for your kindness. We are going to Boston to procure some books for pursuing our studies. If you could tell us where there is a book store in which they keep Catholic books, we should be obliged," said Clarissa.

"I will do so. Here is the address," he said, as he wrote it down on a bit of paper and gave it to her. Now, would you think it amiss, if I gave you the name of some good books?"

"By no means. That is just what both of us would like," said Grace.

"Pardon me again, ladies, but do you read German or French?"

"Yes, sir. Both of us read both languages. And if it will aid you in selecting the names of books, we also read Latin and Greek," said Clarissa with a smile. The old gentleman laughed quietly and for several minutes turned all his attention to his note book. At last he gave them a small piece of paper with the names of four books written on it.

"I take it for granted you were brought up in the Congregational Religion," he said as he rose.

"Yes, sir," they both replied.

"Then the books will suit you," he answered, and, as the train was just running into the sta-

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tion at Boston he bowed and left them before they could ask him who he was.

They purchased their books and a number of others, besides what their kind friend on the train had suggested. The package was so large that they ordered it to be sent the same day by express. Having nothing more to do, they determined to go to the Cathedral, on Washington Street, and see all that was to be seen. There was no one in the building but an old woman who was cleaning, and who, seeing they were strangers, came to them and offered to take them about. As they were passing a confessional, Clarissa turned to her guide and said:

"What is this place for?"

"That's where the priest hears confessions," she replied.

"May I examine it?" asked Clarissa.

"Yes, Ma'am, but there isn't much to see," she said.

"Well," said Clarissa; "you see, we are not Catholics, and we have heard such strange things about the confessional that we want to examine one of them." Then she looked it all over, and went in where the penitent goes, knelt down and looked through the grating, and examined the little slide that closes the grating

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on the penitent who is waiting his turn, and found it quite a simple but solid piece of carpenter work. She came out in a minute and said:

"Grace, it is all different from what we were told when we were children. Go in and see for yourself." And while their guide looked on in wonder at these two "Yankees" and their "go-in's on", another lie had been nailed by them both. They passed on to the altar of the Blessed Virgin, where their guide knelt down for a moment. Then she said to them:

"This is the Blessed Mother's altar."

"Whose mother is it?" asked Grace, quite innocently.

"Why ma'm, the Mother of God, and of us all," she replied.

"The Virgin Mary, she means," explained Clarissa to her friend in a whisper.

"What do they do here?" asked Grace.

"They offer the Sacrifice of the Mass every day. This is the altar where the bishop says Mass."

"Grace," said Clarissa, "the Sacrifice is offered every day in this church, just as it was in the Temple at Jerusalem. Now there comes to me a text from the Hebrew: 'We have a Sacrifice whereof they have no right to eat, who serve

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the Tabernacle.' Where would St. Paul go now to find the sacrifice he spoke of? He could not find it in any Protestant church, for when they started they did away with all sacrifice; The Lord's Supper with us is in no sense a sacrifice, holy as we may esteem it to be." Then, turning to her guide, she said: "Tell us, for we are desirous to know, what is the sacrifice which is offered here?"

"Well, ma'am, it is the sacrifice that was offered by Jesus Christ on Calvary, only here it is offered under the appearances of bread and wine. But the priest offers the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Father in heaven for the living and the dead."

"Thank you," said Clarissa. I think I understand something of what you mean. But tell me, why, in your communion, do you not give the wine to the lay people? You say the bread is turned into the Body of Christ, and the wine into the Blood of Christ. Now, the people ought to receive both, as Christ has said. Can you explain this to me?"

"Christ is whole and entire under the form of bread, and also under the form of wine," replied the woman.

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“Grace,” said Clarissa, “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.”

They left her, asking her prayers; this old woman; and went their way out and home. But later on they sought her out, and many a good thing she received from the two “Yankee Catholics”, as she called them. It is said that when one has developed all the natural virtues and kept the natural law as well as one knows how, God will reveal himself and give such a one a chance of salvation, provided the ordinary means of salvation cannot be had.

But what can we say of a soul like that of our heroine, who is in the soul of the Church but who has not yet come to participate in the graces which are enjoyed by those who are in the body of the Church? So far we have seen that God has led this soul in a most wonderful way. Every natural virtue that she has, she has cultivated to the best of her ability. And what faith is developed in her soul is living and strong. Hope also is firm, and gives her such a hold on God as to make her ready to do an act which, in the eyes of her ancestors, would have been an act of apostasy. Charity, or the love of God, springs from her soul like a mighty tree.

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She loves Him because He first loved us, and she loves all her neighbors and herself because God loved them also.

Can we wonder, then, that this soul is being led directly to God? Or, that He said to her guardian angel:

“Watch over her, for she is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name to many!” It is God who is dealing with her soul, where He took up His abode in the Sacrament of Baptism and whence He has never departed.

“He shall give His angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; and in their hands shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

Clarissa had a good heart and a strong will, two things essential to heroic virtue like hers. And, although she was passing away from the things that had strong ties, to regions and people of whom she knew nothing, she saw the hand of God in it all, and, like Abraham when he went out from among his own people and his father's house, she went forward full of faith.

Some days after the journey to Boston, Grace Buckminster came over to see Clarissa and to claim a book or two. Clarissa came

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down, and Grace saw that her eyes were red with weeping.

“Why Clarissa,” she said, “what is the matter with you? You have been crying.”

“Grace, I have been upstairs taking leave of some of the idols that I used to worship, and I find it hard to part with them. What they are, you know, — and perhaps you will not find it so hard to part from them because you are not so sentimental as I am.”

“Idols, Clarissa? Why, what do you mean?”

“I will tell you. If I become a Catholic, I shall have to give up going to meeting and go to Mass instead. Now, I loved what I am prepared to give up, — but I hardly know to what I am going. I do not suppose that they have anything to take the place of prayer-meetings, and so I have to give up those which I love, not knowing what I am to receive in return. These are some of my shattered idols, and I was weeping over them as I threw them away, and resolved to return to them no more. I am ready now to take whatever comes, as coming from God’s hand.”

“Clarissa, my dear, you are a heroine, surely. Why, I am sure we shall find in the Catholic Church enough to make up for what we have

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lost. To tell the truth, for the past few years my heart has not been so warm as it used to be towards church and its services, and I have found more comfort with my Bible and the organ and hymn book, than in church or prayer-meetings. It won't cost me much in this line, but I guess people will snub us."

"Let them," said Clarissa. "I have something now to tell you. Some time ago there came to me an idea that the dead in heaven could pray for us. And if they can, I thought, what harm is there in asking them to do so? None, that I could see. And so, ever since then, I have added to my regular prayers this one: 'Mary, Mother of Christ, pray for me,' and I believe she has. For no one can tell all I have had to go through the last few weeks, and I have never broken down once. Here are two things I wanted to show you today. These are my brother's beads, and this is his prayer book. I have been reading it this afternoon, and I have found out that Catholics do not "count their beads," as we used to call it. It is called the rosary, and if you will read the explanation of it out of this prayer book while I go upstairs, I'll be down soon."

"Clarissa," said her friend as soon as she

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came back, "I am surprised and delighted with the rosary. Why, I have one at home, and I never know what to do with it. We bought it when we were in Rome, years ago, and had it blessed by the Pope, as every one else did. I've kept it as a souvenir, simply. Now let us say the rosary together, as this prayer book directs, before we begin to open our books."

"I am glad to do it, because of my brother, whose beads these were," said Clarissa.

So they knelt, side by side, and the Holy Mother of God looked down upon them with compassion, rejoicing to see how they were yielding to the graces she was sending them, and preparing to send them even more and greater.

Grace, springing from the depths of the ever blessed Trinity as from a never-failing limpid and crystal fountain, is drawn thence by Christ. Out of the infinite, across the immeasurable barriers that divide the divine Creator and His work, it leaps, — as the stream leaps through the canyon from the everlasting mountain, and flows away into the river to the sea below. Grace: coming from Christ to Mary. Ah, she is full of grace. It flows in through her, as its ordinary channel, across all the levels and



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plains of humanity, and it goes out into the broad ocean of our lives and strengthens us. Grace! Behold how it is drawn forth. Pain and poverty; the birth in the manger; the dreadful Flight into Egypt; the Loss of the Child; the Presentation in the temple; the Way of the Cross; the Crucifixion; the Taking Down from the Cross; the Burial of Jesus. Each of these acts, on His part and on hers, drew untold grace for men.

Then, think of the prayers that are ascending to God; the rosaries; the Stations of the Cross; all the meditations and exercises in Religious Communities; all the alms, all the fastings; all the heroic sufferings, all cruel martyrdoms.

Then, add the patience, the long suffering, the kindnesses to enemies, all the meekness and charity, all the strong faith, and hope in adversity; all the aspirations, ejaculations; all the acts of self-control; and ho, what a host of things we have to cast at the feet of our Queen, to draw forth the grace of God.

It has slipped down to us, we can hardly tell how, much less why, and it is winged on the merits of Christ, with the aid of Mary. Then it is hurried on its way by some one whom we never saw or heard of, who said some prayers

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for a "soul troubled or in need," or some one who prayed for the conversion of non-Catholics in general. While a Mass is said, three thousand miles away, unknown to anyone but the priest who says it, the soul for whom he prays receives the gift of faith that same morning.

Thus it is that grace comes to us poor children of men, through Christ to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Mary has now taken into her household these two old maids of New England. See them as they kneel, trying to struggle through the Joyful Mysteries of the rosary. We can leave them there now, for they are safe in charge. The angels have done their work well and where there were half a dozen forty years ago — come Christmas — now hundreds take a personal interest in Clarissa and her friend.

We who are Catholics ought to make more of the blessed spirits of light who watch around us and guard us. See what they have done for her, our heroine. It is they who have prompted her, her friends, those who never saw her but once and spoke to her like the old man on the train and the woman in the Cathedral.

Multitudes of such things they are doing for

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us daily. O if only we could be more appreciative of their work for us and encourage them by our thankfulness to them.

Clarissa came to know the angels after she came into the Catholic Church. And once she did get their acquaintance, especially the one whose charge she is, she tried to make up for lost time by devotion to him.

So the winter studies went on but our two friends made no move nor sign until late in the spring. For Clarissa said to Grace:

“We had better study the religion well before we join it and then we need give the clergy no trouble. We can go and join.”

So from December till May they were at their books, saying the beads every time they met to compare notes and advancing rapidly in the knowledge and love of the religion they were investigating.

Clarissa and Grace called on the Crossman family after they became Catholics. And the call was returned, on which occasion it had to come up that Clarissa was studying the Catholic Religion. For the books were visible on the table in the room when the callers waited. So Clarissa simply said:



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“I am reading your religion and expect to join it later on.” All of which delighted the Crossmans but they were prudent and kept their own counsel.

CHAPTER XI

A Parish Priest

“**T**HERE is a sick call, Father.”

“Yes. Keep the messenger and I will be down in half a minute.” said the cheery voice of Father McSorely as he hastily finished his toilet and ran down stairs to see who was ill and what was the matter.

Father McSorely had been brought up in the city of Boston, and as a child served Mass. His education was received first in the public schools and later in the famous college of the Jesuit Fathers. He graduated there with distinguished honors, not alone in letters but also in physical performance. He was a good baseball player, a swift runner and in fact at one time or another had entered in every sort of game encouraged by college authorities. His mind was gifted with those two qualities which it is rare to find in the same man equally developed: acuteness of perception, and profundity of thought. By nature he was of a cheerful and lively disposition and, being careful of other peoples' feelings, he always had friends and

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never any enemies. He followed the rule laid down for him in his life of devotion and tried to do every religious duty as well. For as a boy he learned that it is not the number of prayers we say so much as the way we say them. So he never did the extraordinary piety act that we hear so much about. He was contented with doing ordinary things well.

When he was about twenty years of age he was sent to Rome to study at the American College and while there pursuing his course he learned to read a little Spanish, Arabic and Syriac. French, German and Hebrew he had mastered in his ordinary preparation for the Priesthood. He was appointed to the pastorate of the Catholic Church in the little town we are dwelling in about two years before the A. P. A. fever broke out. In less than six months he had won the heart of every one except the few who have no hearts at all when the word "Catholic" is mentioned.

One evening not long after the war with Spain had closed the old council was in session at Warren's store. Tom Reilly was there listening to the wisdom that fell from the lips of some of its members, and to the inane remarks of individuals who had no mental calibre at all,

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like Phineas Slab. Phin had been reading some of the choice A. P. A. literature direct from Boston and had made the assertion that:

"Priests are ignorant."

"Well, Phin," said the old G. A. R. veteran, "I know one who is not."

"Humph. Who's he?" said Phin.

"Father McSorely."

"What does he know that some of us don't, or Mr. Hawkins don't?" said Phin.

"Well, he can read Spanish, for I saw him doing it and putting it into English for Mr. Sweetman whose son sent him a letter from Cuba with a newspaper printed in that language. Think Mr. Hawkins knows anything about Spanish, Phin?" asked the veteran.

"Wa'al, that ain't much. Spanish ain't much of a language anyhow," replied Mr. Slab.

"Well, Phin, what do you think of French and German, and the two languages spoken in the Holy Land?" asked Tom Reilly; "for he can speak the first two and read the others. Besides, he knows Hebrew as well as he does Latin and Greek."

"Well, I guess Mr. Hawkins knows just as much as he does anyhow," said Phin.

"I know one thing about it," said Mr. Dyer,

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"that he don't know any Latin, for I asked him one day what "sine die" meant, which I saw in a newspaper and he didn't know. But Father McSorely not only told me what it meant but all about it. As for the French and German, I know he don't understand either of them for I heard some of the people who live in the town say so. And they had to go to Father McSorely to get it out of Hawkins."

"How long do your ministers study in preparing to preach, Mr. Slab?" asked Tom.

"O, about two or three years," said Phin.

"Well now, Father McSorely began when he was fourteen to be a priest. Six years he was at college, then he was seven years in the seminary. Thirteen years before he preached a sermon," said Tom.

"Phin, you had better quit this subject; you will get the worst of it," said Mr. Shephard.

"Well, he don't know anything about the Bible. You Catholics ain't allowed to read it, you know," said Phin.

"Tommy," said Tom Reilly, "you just run home and bring the big Bible here quick."

"Now, Mr. Slab, — I am tired of hearing ignorant fellows like you. Here is a Bible. It is a Catholic Bible. It is mine. The priest

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blessed it. It is in English, and Mr. Shephard can examine it and see if it is the Bible or not. And when he has done examing it I'll ask him to read the Pope's letter on the Use of the Bible by Catholics." Tom was pretty angry when he said this, but he could not help smiling when Slab's face showed his discomfiture.

"Yes," said Mr. Shepard, "it is the Bible and the handsomest one I have ever seen. Are there any more in town, Mr. Reilly?"

"Yes, sir," said Tom. I know a couple of dozen families who have them." Then Mr. Shephard read aloud the famous letter of Pius VI to Mgr. Martini.

"Now, Mr. Slab, remember, this book was written in Hebrew and Greek at first. My priest can read both languages and yours can't read either of them. So I guess we had better drop the question, eh?" said Tom.

"But your priest don't preach the Bible to you in English. He always preaches in Latin," said Phin.

"Well, Phin, that is like the rest of your information. It is better to know a very little than to know a lot of things that are not so," said Tom.

Mr. Shephard took up the defense for the priest:

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“Mr. Slab, you are demolished, as you always are when you come in here making a fool of yourself. Now, I am on the Library Committee, and so is Father McSorely. And he is the only one of us who has a thorough knowledge of books and what is in them. All the people in town who read — and you never come near the place — say we never had so good a town library as we have now since Father McSorely came among us. He will look at every book that comes in. We can go to him and get information on all kinds of subjects, and if not the information, he can tell us where to find the books containing it. I know that he is up in Botany and Geology and he can tell you all the plants that grow wild hereabouts and the history of the rocks is like an open book to him. We talked of taking Mr. Hawkins, but he said he would not serve “with an ignorant priest.” Think of it, Phin, — he said that to me. Now, I am not a church member. But I believe if any church is true at all, it is the one which you folks came from three hundred and fifty years ago.”

Slab went out after this, much as the kicked dog runs out of the room. And Tom Reilly, who was laughing, said:

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"I'm sorry he's gone, for I had another shot for him. Here are some of the bills that Father McSorely gave me tonight. They will be sent all over town tomorrow."

"What's this? *Lectures by Catholic Priests on Living Subjects.* Why, Mr. Reilly, what are you Catholics going to do?"

"Just what you see advertised, Mr. Dyer," answered Tom. "We have secured the hall for a week and two priests are going to lecture every evening, the second week in February. There will be a question box at the door, and any fair question about the Catholic Religion put in good faith will be answered each evening by the lecturer.

Now, any of you can try to stick them, but I assure you that they are men who have made a profound study of the difficulties which this age proposes to religion in general and to the Catholic Religion in particular."

"Well, naow, I suppose," said Luke Hastings, "that they'll jump all over us Protestants."

"No," said Tom. Don't you see at the bottom of the handbill: *Nothing Controversial. No Abuse?* The object of these lectures is to ex-

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plain the Catholic Religion, not to attack the Protestants."

"Will they take up a collection?" said Luke.

"No," said Tom. "They do not charge anything for admission."

"Well, I'm a-goin', b'gosh! I'm a-goin', 's long 's it's in a hall. But I couldn't make up my mind to go to the Catholic Meetin' House," said Luke.

"Just why we hadn't it in the Church, for men like you, who are afraid there's snakes under the seats where we put Protestants in our Church. We'll be glad to see you, Luke, so get your questions ready," said Tom.

"Mr. Reilly," said Mr. Shephard, "I want to tell you that I'm glad this series of lectures is coming off. I am not a bit prejudiced against your religion, though there is a great deal in it I do not know and much that I cannot understand. If those men are all you say they are, I won't miss a single service during the whole week."

Father McSorely was very busy for the next week and Tom was helping him, while the altar boys scoured the neighboring country and posted up the bills everywhere, in a radius of five miles, announcing the event. Great cards



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were displayed in the shop windows, in the Post Office and Railway station, — indeed, no pains were spared to advertise it well.

Father McSorely wrote letters to each of the four ministers in town and received courteous notes from all except Mr. Hawkins, who deigned him no reply.

The Episcopalians volunteered their choir to sing one evening; the Unitarian choir also followed suit, and so did the Baptist.

When the evening came the hall was packed with non-Catholics from the churches and many more who went to no church. Catholics had been told that their ticket of admission was to bring a non-Catholic friend, so they were all zealous enough.

The Friday before it the weekly paper had an announcement to the effect that "Evangelist Martin will lecture every evening during the week at the Congregational Church. Subject: "The Enemy of the Republic," — in six lectures. Tuesday night, for men only. Wednesday night, for women only. "Romanism exposed."

But, fortunately, they never came off, and Mr. Martin left town Monday morning. It seems that the trustees of the Congregational Church

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had held a meeting a few days before and had concluded not to have the lectures for lack of funds. But Mr. Hawkins had had his programme printed before he was informed of this decision. There would be a bill for light and heat to pay if the lectures were held, which the trustees could not meet. Again, they had wit enough to see how the tide was setting, and they determined to drift with it, so Mr. Hawkins had the melancholy pleasure of preparing his Sunday sermon, while Mr. Green's hall was filled to overflowing every evening.

The lectures were listened to by the people with the closest attention, and the evident sincerity of the lecturers convinced even some of the most prejudiced among the people of the town that these priests were telling the real truth about their religion. One old farmer by the name of Eames, who came every night, said:

"Wa'al, I never knew the Catholics wuz Christians before. I always thought they wuz Pagans, and worshipped idols."

As for the Question Box, it was filled every night, and even Mr. Hawkins sent in a lot of "Scripture Questions," which it would take a whole treatise to answer, and they were quickly put aside. All attempts at controversy were

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quietly put down and no one's feelings were hurt. The lectures were destitute of sarcasm, irony or even the slightest hint of abuse. There was no reference made to any other religion except upon points where it agreed with the Catholic, if we except the lecture on the Divinity of Christ and the Pope.

Each night brought a larger crowd than the preceding one, and any person who could boast that he had heard all the lectures was considered fortunate.

A class of inquirers was formed and, after the close of the lectures, on Sunday evening, when the two priests held a sort of levee or reception of a parting character, it was arranged that Father Doherty should remain for a couple of weeks in town to form the class and give the first instructions, after which Father McSorely would continue the work.

The last lecture was on the "True American Citizen — The Man of Conscience," and it was the master-piece of the series, next to the one which touched all hearts, on "What Becomes of the Dead?" The people hung upon the words of the speaker and, after the audience had sung "*America*," some enthusiastic non-Catholic shouted:

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"Let's sing the Doxology!" and from a thousand throats rose the grand old words and tune which are part of the inheritance of the Puritans, received from their Catholic forefathers.

Clarissa was there every evening with Grace Buckminster and followed each lecture with note-book and pencil. The next day they verified it all in the books they had bought and were more than delighted to find the agreement perfect.

That they did not become Catholics at this time was, as they said, because they had not sufficiently acquainted themselves with the doctrine and practises of the Catholic Church.

Among the inquirers was Mr. Shephard, the leading man of the grocery store council. Joe Adams was baptized a few weeks after, but no one was surprised at that, for his long and intimate acquaintance with Tom Reilly had prepared him. About one hundred people were received into the Church within a year after the Mission, but, as they were nearly all those who had never been to any church anywhere, they were not missed from any of the Protestant churches.

There was one family of High Church people who left the P. E. Church for the Catholics,

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much to the disgust of the pastor, for they were his best workers.

The literature that was given out during the lectures went far and wide and reached many who never heard the speakers at all. The lectures themselves were taken down by a boy who was studying shorthand at Boston College and, being translated into longhand, filled four or five columns of the weekly paper for as many weeks. And this was the beginning of a series of short articles on the Catholic Religion and its doctrine from Father McSorely's pen, and this series was continued for four years. There is testimony to be had that more than twenty converts dated their first advance to the reading of one or another of these articles. They cost him but little time and labor and were worth hundreds of dollars to him in this world and in the world to come "Life Eternal." Every Sunday evening when the Rosary was said there were prayers for the conversion of non-Catholics and so it was that the number of converts grew apace.

In the evenings after the lectures were over, the council at the grocery store became a dead letter and it was not until early summer that its interesting sessions were resumed with all the

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members present. This was owing to the fact that some of the principal members of it had taken up the study of the Catholic Religion and so had not the leisure evenings to discuss "matters in general" in the old place.

Along in May the Congregational minister, who had persuaded the trustees to hold on a little longer, tried to get up a revival of religion. It was a failure, as only a few people attended, and the fine old Gothic church, built to hold eight hundred people, could boast of no more than one hundred and fifty in attendance. The editor of the weekly paper printed an editorial in which he contrasted the manner in which the Revival was conducted with that good nature which had characterized the Lectures. The Revivalists could not help attacking the Catholic Church and one of them called it Anti-Christ. The editor said:

"Who Anti-Christ is, we do not pretend to say, but we do say right here that in the sermon preached last night by the Revivalist at the Congregationalist Church there was displayed an Anti-Christian spirit that was notably absent from the lectures given here last February by the Priests."

CHAPTER XII

Books

A KNOWLEDGE of books may be of two kinds. We may be acquainted intimately with the contents of a few books, and that is well, if they are what we need to help us in life. Or we may be acquainted with the titles of books and the names of their authors, so that we know just where to lay our hands on what we want or give the desired information to others.

If you had been allowed to look over some manuscripts of Father McSorely's student days, you would have seen that he had a carefully prepared list of authorization books on all subjects. While he was studying the treatise on Holy Orders, he copied into his note book the titles of all the books he could find on the subject and noted against them their value as references.

Such a knowledge of books gives a man great power. Even if he has not read them all he knows them, and is like the general who, although he has not seen all his army or supplies

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in all their details, yet knows exactly what and where they are and is by this knowledge enabled to draw upon them as necessity demands.

A book that does not teach is of no value. Even the simplest books contain lessons of wisdom and what some people call books of nonsense, while there is nothing in them sensible, yet very often teach the tired mind how to rest. For the mind of a man is continually creating and building, and it is good sometimes that it goes back to see some of the absurdities it has rejected in a book of nonsense.

The book that teaches error and falsehood is to be avoided unless we wish to refute the error and know how to deny the falsehood. The simplest books are the best. Those written in simple language are the easiest to understand, especially when they deal with what are called deep questions.

Books that appeal to the imagination are the first sort which man has found necessary for his education. And so under the guise of fairy stories we are taught all the natural virtues; and in some of the again, but in a more indirect way, the supernatural ones. Read again our old friend "Jack and the Bean Stalk," and see how Prudence and Temperance, Justice and Bravery

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are shown up as the virtues which are man's. Indirectly we have a glimpse of Fidelity and Trust; Hope in Promises; and love, which prompts him through all his undertakings.

When we get a little older we begin to wonder about the earth, and travel, adventure and romance will claim our attention. Now is the time to be careful of what we read, to get the truest books we can find, all in touch with our hearts; for it is now that the heart is supreme over the mind. Later on there will be a more even balance between the two, if our reading is good. When we come to a more mature age we can and ought to take up books which deal with the abstract, teaching again the lessons which we learned as children in the concrete. The story will remain as the teacher of men as long as the human race endures. And, be we young children or old children on this planet, it makes no difference, — for in one form or another we must learn the wisdom of the fairy tales.

So a good book is a storehouse wherein someone has put away in nice shape for our use the secrets and the truths, the mysteries and the revelations of nature and the supernatural.

I speak of an ideal book, maybe. There are many such. But such a book is something sac-



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red and of far greater value than the little sum of money that we expend in its purchase. I remember the two books which have influenced my life, and whenever I see a copy of either of them I am filled with reverence for it and would handle it more tenderly and carefully than someone else who had not my experience with them both.

In ancient times the minstrel was the book for the people. He sang of Truth, of Love, of War, and all that made men nobler, purer and braver. When he came to the baron's castle, his place was always secure and he was served with the best the kitchen could afford. His person was sacred and inviolate, as befitting one who held an office like a priest's, — to be a teacher of truth among men.

So in these latter days when minstrels are no more and books are multiplied and everyone writes, including the author, — let us be good to our books and take care to see that they teach us truth and not error.

When Clarissa read the little slip of paper which the old gentleman on the train had given her, she found the titles of four books. They were: *Variations*, Bossuet, in French; Chalonier's *Catholic Christian Instructed*; Water-

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worth's *Decrees and Canons of the Council of Trent*; and the *Enchiridion*, by Denzinger. But before they left the bookstore they had purchased prayerbooks, the Life of St. Francis de Sales and a complete set of Bonal's Theology.

Truly a formidable array, — one which not everybody would be qualified to take up as a series of study for a winter's work. But a week's examination of these works gave them a wholesome and hearty respect for the religion which could produce them, and then they attacked them in earnest. It soon began to dawn upon them — that is, as soon as they had perused the opening pages of Bonal, that they had forgotten to purchase a Catholic work on Philosophy.

"Now, Grace, I'll go to Boston tomorrow and see what I can find," said Clarissa after they discovered what was wanting. So a second journey was made to the bookstore, and she inquired for some Catholic work on Philosophy. Not being satisfied to take anything in English, like the *Stonyhurst Series*, she said:

"I must have it in Latin." So the dealer took down *Tongiori*, *Sanseverino*, *Liberatore*, and *Zigliara*, and asked which she preferred. What a pity it is that in some of our Catholic

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bookstores the salesmen have so little knowledge of books! All they know is the price of a book or that it has a fair sale. But, as it happened, a priest overheard the conversation between Clarissa and the dealer and offered to arbitrate. So, when the dealer had introduced the priest as Father and Clarissa had told her name, they got along famously. She chose the volume of Sanseverino, and the priest, apologizing, asked her if she had any instructor in Philosophy.

“Why, Sir,” she replied, “I live in, and I am not even a Catholic. A friend of mine and I are giving all our time to the study of the Catholic Religion. I found we had all the books we wanted except one on Philosophy, and so came to procure it today.”

“Have you any books on Theology?” he asked.

“O yes, — six volumes by an author called Bonal,” she said.

“Dear me! I hope you will be a Catholic after all this reading,” he said.

Clarissa said to him in an undertone:

“We are going to join the Catholic Church as soon as we learn its practises.”

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“A very good plan, too. If I might inquire,—who told you of Bonal’s Theology?”

“Well, no one. I remembered seeing or hearing some one speak of Calvin’s Institutes of Theology. So I asked for a work in Latin on Theology, and took what they gave me.”

“I wish you every success in your undertaking, Miss Lincoln, and I hope you will call some day when you are in the city and have leisure.”

“I shall do so with pleasure,” she replied, and the good priest departed, wondering at finding Yankee women buying Catholic Theologies and Philosophies. I wonder what he will say when he meets her again, as he may, and learns that she reads French, Italian and German.

Not long before Clarissa and Grace made their first visit to the Priest’s to arrange about their reception into the Church, the old crowd were in the grocery store, and the discussion turned on the merits of a number of books which had been distributed during the lectures. Phineas Slab was not there, nor had he been since Joe Adams became a Catholic, but Ira Cartwright and Joe were having considerable difficulty over the merits of the two great books, *Catholic Belief*, and *Faith of Our Fathers*.

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"Well, *Catholic Belief* is all right. It is a good book, and I'm not denying it. But, then, I took to *Faith of Our Fathers* because it puts questions and answers them. The questions are just the ones you want to ask and don't know how. It seems to me the simplest book and the easiest to read. Now, Ira, you've been readin' Catholic Belief, and you hain't joined the Church yet."

"No, Joe, but I'm goin' to on Saturday. So I ain't much behind you, even if you did read *Faith of Our Fathers*. *Catholic Belief* is as plain as it can be, and I liked it because of the prayers in it. That was the first thing that drew me to the Church, and I reckon if it hadn't been for that, I'd stay out of the Catholic Church as long as Phin Slab will. By the way, where is Phin these days?"

"O, he's sick," said Luke Hastings. "They say he never recovered from the disappointment he had in not attending the lectures by the Evangelist Martin."

"Well, about these two books. I guess, Ira,—it's like hats, shoes and coats. The same sizes and styles don't fit and suit every one," remarked Joe.

"Say, gentlemen," put in Tom Reilly, "I

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know a better book of instruction than either, and you both know it also. Guess what it is. It is the Catechism you've been studying all these weeks to learn. Now, I never have left off its study myself and I know it word for word. I have been over it Sunday after Sunday with my children ever since they were old enough to learn. I find it full of instruction, and when I take out one of the bigger books, it seems to me like a sermon with the text taken out of the Catechism."

"Yes, that is so," said Joe. "I keep my Catechism in my pocket all the time, to refresh my memory now and then; but I like to read the other books."

"In the town library there are some good Catholic books which came in last week," said Tom, "and I am going to get a list of them, so we can read up a good bit about the Church. Now, do you subscribe for a good Catholic paper, Joe? No, I thought not, and so I am going to send your name to the agent for the Catholic It is not run by a foreigner who can give us all points, nor by a man who will run it in the interest of the Catholic people in Ireland. It is a paper for American Catholics pure and simple, and the editor is an American."

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"Put me down, too," said Ira Cartwright.

"And me," said Mr. Warren, the storekeeper. Tom got five names that evening before he went home, and two subscribers for a good Catholic magazine.

"Well, talking about books and papers," said George Allard, who had come in a few minutes before, "your boy gave me a tract one night, Tom, and I hadn't a tract in my hand since old George Trask used to preach temperance here when I was a boy. I stuffed it into my pocket, and when I came home I took it out to look at it. As soon as I saw the title I had to sit down and read it all through. It is called: *What My Uncle Said About the Pope*. Well, I laughed until my wife came in and asked me what was the matter. And I told her I'd got a Catholic tract. 'Pshaw!' she said, 'I got one too, and it's as dry as a salt codfish.' 'Well,' said I, 'mine is good.' So the end of it all was that I had to read it to her, and then she laughed too. But when we came to think, then we quit laughing. 'Wife,' says I, 'this ain't a laughing matter, now, — is it?' 'No,' she said, 'it begins to look serious, George.' She had been a Methodist, but she fell away ten years ago, and we didn't go nowhere. Well, the next night I went

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up and got a little book called *Plain Facts*. It is sold for five cents in quantities, and I don't see how they do it. Father McSorely told me he liked it better than any of them, and I ain't much of a judge, but I guess he's about right."

"Yes, the tracts are good, and I have a whole lot of them, of all sorts and on all sorts of subjects. So if you people want any, just come up to my house. They do not cost anything, unless you want to give a dime or a quarter to help the cause of spreading Catholic Literature," said Tom.

The next day, as Clarissa was going into the public library, she met Father McSorely coming out. He stopped her and spoke to her, and asked her how she had enjoyed the Lectures. She never hinted to him of anything about her studies, nor did he say a word about them, if he knew from the Crossman girls the work she was engaged in. So she went into the reading room, and there on the board was a list of "Additions to the Library," Hunter's Theology; Hettinger, two volumes; Copies of all the great controversial works; Lives of the most famous Bishops, Priests, and Women of the Catholic Church in the United States; and twenty or more of the Lives of the Saints; Then a well-selected as-

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sortment of Catholic fiction; — in all, about a hundred new books. It was a gift worth half a dozen stained glass windows with the donor's name proudly flaunted in glowing letters at the foot. And no one knew that Mr. Crossman had given them to the Town Library as his first Thanksgiving offering for his conversion. Clarissa, who was a good-hearted girl, then and there determined to enrich the library out of her own ample means, and she did it in the following autumn. And so it is that this little town can boast of all the standard Catholic writers in English, on all sorts of subjects, in its library.

Every one reads nowadays and where there is a public library in a town the priest ought to show a very decided interest in it. He is something more than an officer to keep a thousand or two Catholic people in order, and to command respect from the non-Catholics because he does it well. He is something else than a Mass Priest, a sick-call priest, a good Father Confessor. His duty is not done when he has built his church, school and convent and residence, with perhaps a hospital or a home for the aged or orphans. There is still in his soul the voice of John the Baptist:

“Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make



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straight His paths in the desert." His flock is not the faithful Catholics alone who crowd his church, nor yet the unfaithful ones either that he mourns over. There are the other sheep who are not of this fold, to be brought to the "one fold and the one Shepherd." They are the non-Catholic portion of his flock, for he cannot but claim them. They are God's, and His Son died for them, even as He died for those who call themselves Catholics. Yes, he is something more than he has been inclined to think himself to be. He is a missionary to non-Catholics in the land where God has placed him, and if he is doing nothing for them, God will demand their blood at his hands.

It is an awful responsibility and the good Father McSorely was the type of many another one who in these days is hard at work trying to get the truth before the people who are hungry for it but have no idea of it.

The printed word, — The Apostolate of the Press, — going into such works as these, was more than half the secret of Father McSorely's work. But the things which he accomplished, and the collection of over one thousand Catholic books in the Town Library, with all the Catholic Magazines and one or two Catholic newspapers,

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— will never be forgotten until his generation has been gone a hundred years.

All his people took a good Catholic newspaper, and there was among the young men of the town what was called the Postal Club. The young men would collect each week all the Catholic newspapers they could find in the town and take them over to their hall. They had a list of non-Catholics, obtained from various sources, principally from the various converts of the town, and thence each week a paper was mailed away to some non-Catholic, and they had the pleasure of knowing of many converts made in this way. No one in this world will ever know all the good that was done. It cost a cent a week for each one, and as the penny collection was taken up weekly, it "came easy to give it," as some of them would say.

Yes, — give me my book. Let me sit down with it in the cool and shady nook or by the warm fireside. It has been chosen for me by a wise scholar and a true-hearted man. I am sure of its worth. How, in the quiet two hours or more of its uninterrupted perusal, has light and joy, which alone spring from the truth, inundated my soul and exalted it! Give me the book. I will take it and read it.



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Ye holy angels, are you happy now? Can you join with your Queen in the great Hymn of Praise to Him who made both her and you, and be glad? Yes, for the Lord hath done great things for us here in this little town, and He has blessed it before it has come to pass, for He knows how some one will depart one day, leaving a blessing behind him. Still must you pray for a few days, until your charge Clarissa comes and gladdens your spirits with her vows of Baptism and tears of contrition in her first confession.

CHAPTER XIII

The Minister's Call

THERE was once in the history of the town where Clarissa lived a great boulder, which lay comfortably ensconced on the side of Howe's Hill, just above the road that meandered lazily along in its sandy robes below. It was a solid old rock, and was full of great dark green crystals of tourmoline; tradition said that more than one gem had been taken from it. There it had lain for centuries, where the great giant iceberg had whispered, as it tenderly left it to its rest, "Stay here, and some day you shall look out over the world from a mountain side."

The old boulder never forgot the word delivered to it from the great blue-white ice-sprite who sailed away on the waters. And now, for a quartette, perchance, of a hundred thousand years, it had been exalted. "I have seen the world," it said. "I know it all; for have I not from this, my lofty perch, looked out upon it in its entirety? Who can teach me any more than I know?"



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But there came a day one springtime, after the frosts of winter, when the old boulder seemed to be once more in motion. It felt the solid ground moving from beneath its great Laurentian feet, and it took one step forward, and another, — and then, with a crash that thrilled all through its rocky ribs and shook its stony head, it went down into the little valley below and into the green road with its yellow stole of sand, to find that, though it had looked forth on the world for four thousand centuries, there was much in the world that it had never seen.

Alas for the boulder! Its end had come. For men, with great iron weapons, came and made holes in it. And then they put it in powder and blew it into a thousand pieces. Some of the pieces they cast aside and some were built into a stone wall. Others were ground into powder under horses' feet in the road which the boulder, from its lofty throne of superiority, had affected to despise. The humble road said to it: "You have come to me now. I will protect you." And it took all it could to its heart. Clarissa found in the debris a beautiful Tourmaline which she kept in her cabinet, and it was from this frag-



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ment of the old boulder that I learned its history and copied it down here.

So had Clarissa's rock of prejudice fallen from the hill of pride into the valley of humility, and there it had been ground to powder by the rock of the Church. Clarissa had no prejudice now. All her judgments in religious matters had the element of right reason within them, and were firm and not to be shaken from their place. She had become like the quiet, yellow road and took the simple, foolish and weak things of the world to herself with the same strength as of old, but with no confidence in self and all in God henceforth. Her faith was as beautiful and well-defined as the tourmaline.

It was May now, our Lady's month. And every evening Clarissa and Grace had been to Church. They were arranging to be received on the 26th of May, which was the feast of Pentecost that year. May! O what memories of days spent in the wilderness of error outside the Church do you bring back to us! I see again that beautiful Church in the great New England city where I dwelt four years, studying the classics. I see the altar, decked with flowers and ablaze with lights, and the dear old Father Walsh, who was so kind to me, preaching the

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little homily. I see myself, Protestant as I was, kneeling and bowing down at Benediction. O the grace that comes in the month of May!

Then the scene changes. We are Catholics now, and we have to begin to understand that there is more in May Devotions than can be learned in a lifetime. So we bow low to earth before Mary, and we adore Mary's Son whom she gave to the world, thanking both Jesus and Mary for the faith which is ours.

In this Month of Mary, on a clear and pleasant afternoon, an old conceited gander with his two and twenty silly geese, were parading hither and thither, holding their noisy councils and proclaiming the resolutions which they passed on others to all the world, on the grassy space before the house, where sat Clarissa on the piazza, reading Bonal. The majestic words of the decree of Infallibility had been read over and over gain; and she had laid the book down and wondered what her parents had said when they came to the outer world, and found that they had been in unconscious error all their lives, when she heard a footstep on the walk, and there she saw the Reverend Josiah A. Hawkins stalking up towards her with all the majesty and dignity of bearing he was able to assume.

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Clarissa had expected this visit sooner or later and so she was not wholly unprepared for it. After he was set down in a comfortable rocking chair, he looked at Clarissa, without saying a word, quite steadily and rudely.

Just then the gander called to all his geese with an imperative voice: "Come with me, come back, back, b-a-a-a-a-ck, a-a-a-ck. There is the garden, ga-a-a-a-te o-o-o-o-o-pen, and there are pea-a-a-ase, come ba-a-a-ack." All the geese echoed: "Ba-a-a-a-ack," and started in a long line after the gander, who was leading them straight to the ultimate destruction of half-a-dozen rows of "Tom Thumb" peas, which had just come up a week before.

"Excuse me, Mr. Hawkins," said Clarissa. "I must shut that garden gate or those ridiculous geese will destroy all my peas, which have just come up." So saying, she left him to stare at anything else and went to chase away the geese.

"Miss Lincoln," he began, after Clarissa had come back and taken her seat, "I came to call on you this afternoon to ask you if you have given up coming to the church of your fathers. I have heard rumors which I refused to believe that you were tampering with Rome." He had

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seen her going to the Catholic Church only the night before. "And I felt it my duty to call upon you at once and hear you deny these rumors myself."

"Mr. Hawkins, I have not sat in the pew in your church, nor have I entered its doors for six months, and, unless you are deaf and blind, you must have known long ago that a daughter of the Puritans does not neglect the worship of her God in the Church of her Fathers except for some weighty and excellent reason. In all these months you have never taken interest enough in me to call, to ask me in the street, even, why I left off going to church. I have made up my mind never to go to the Congregational Church again. But, as regards the Catholic Church, I have nothing to say. If I choose to go there, this is a free community, Mr. Hawkins."

"Ah, it is, then, as I supposed. This is no doubt some French novel you are reading, to learn pure Romanism from," he said, picking up the Latin Theology she had been reading.

"Excuse me, Mr. Hawkins, there is that gander, making directly for my flower beds. I'll be back in a moment," and away she flew, leaving Mr. Hawkins to himself and his reflections. "Ca-a-a-th'lic, a-a-a-th'lic," cried the

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geese, as Clarissa drove them wickedly to a place where she knew they would demand her attention in five minutes more. By the time she returned, she had her laugh to herself about the "French novel" and, sitting down, she carefully adjusted her spectacles and said:

"Let me see, now. These geese annoy me so. What were you saying, Mr. Hawkins?"

"I was about to remark upon the habits of Romanists and their teachings. They teach that it is no sin to lie," he said.

"I hardly think so," said Clarissa.

"Well, if you will listen to me I will prove it to you. You have seen the First Church in Old Town, where John Elliott used to preach? Well, some years ago there came to Old Town an Irish Romanist. He went to Deacon Hardnut and asked him for work. So the Deacon, who won't have a Romanist on his place, said to him: 'What church do you go to, Mr. Sullivan?' And this man told a lie. He said: 'I go to the First Church.' So the good Deacon hired him, and he worked well for a week. He got his pay on Saturday. But on Monday morning the Deacon said to him, as he started in for another week's work:

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“ ‘Did you go to Church yesterday, Mr. Sullivan?’ ”

“ ‘O yes,’ ” he said. ‘I was at the First Church, but I got in a little late and sat in a back seat.’ ”

“So the Deacon was satisfied and Sullivan had another week’s work. The next Sunday the Deacon looked for Sullivan, but did not see him in the church. But he told the Deacon that he was up in the gallery. Another week went by, and the Deacon looked everywhere for Sullivan that next Sunday, but not a trace of him could be found. The next day when he came to the house to look for work, the Deacon met him and he was angry.

“ ‘Sullivan, you have lied to me. You told me that you go every Sunday to the First Church, and I find that you go to the Roman Catholic Church every Sunday. What do you mean by such conduct?’ ”

“ ‘Well, Mr. Hardnut, if my Church was not the first Church fifteen hundred years before yours, then tell me which is the first Church.’ And he went off, laughing at his knavery.”

Clarissa laughed, and laughed again, until the poor minister, who failed to see anything funny in the story, said:

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"So you seem to approve of the man's conduct, Miss Lincoln?"

"No, Sir, I do not. But it is far less reprehensible than the conduct of a man who conditions his charity in giving work to the poor on the religion they profess."

"H'm. This example proves the wickedness of the teachings of the priests of the Romish Church. They teach that it is no sin to tell a deliberate falsehood, if good may come. For their books are full of the doctrine, *The End Justifies the Means*."

"Ca-a-a-a-a-th'lic. Go ba-a-a-a-a-ck to the Ca-a-a-ath'lic Church, Ca-a-a-a-a-th'lic," called out the gander to his geese, and Clarissa had to go and drive them from the neighborhood of the milk house. Mr. Hawkins was fuming when she came back from the third expedition after the geese, and so he began on a new tack to assail her position.

"Miss Lincoln, are you aware what the Church of Rome really is?" he began.

"Well, yes," she said. "I think I have a very fair idea of it. I have been studying it all winter."

"But those Romish books do not tell you the

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truth. The Church of Rome is the Anti-Christ of the Revelation," he said.

"How can that be, Mr. Hawkins?" asked Clarissa.

"Listen, and I will tell you. The title of the Pope in Latin is: VICARIVS FILII DEI," he said, writing it out for her on the tablet he had for the purpose. "Now, if you add up the Roman numerals in that title, it gives you six hundred and sixty six, which is the number which Anti-Christ is said to have in the Book of Revelation. Then, six is the number of sin, and Catholics have six candles on their altar by the order of Rome. From this we judge the Pope to be the man of sin, who is anti-Christ."

"Well now, Mr. Hawkins, unfortunately for your theory, it is not sound. The Pope has no such title given to him as you say. And the Roman letters of the alphabet are none of them numerals. The Latin Language has a set of numerals of its own, more or less like some of the letters of its alphabet, but quite distinct from it. They are not in common use. But I, V., X., L., C., D. and M. have in themselves no numerical value whatever. They are only convenient imitations of the old signs. You might say that 'Long John Crane', as they call him, is

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Anti-Christ, because he is six feet six. And lastly, I have this consideration to offer you. St. John in the fourth chapter of his first epistle tells us how to know Anti-Christ, when he says that he is the one who denies Jesus Christ to have come in the flesh. Now, this the Catholics do not deny, but they assert it most vigorously. . . . Excuse me again — There are those troublesome geese."

"Six-six-six-sixty-six," hissed the old gander, as Jumbo came in sight, and he started to chase him. But Jumbo fled to the house, where with arched back and fierce face he kept spitting at the minister, who was afraid of him, but called him "poor pussy," in a tone that meant: "I would drown you if I could."

"Ca-a-a-a-a-ath'lic gee-s-s-s-s-e ge-s-s-s-s-e are we. Ca-a-a-a-a-ath'lic Gee-s-s-s-s-e," they cackled and hissed, so Clarissa imagined, and she came back again to the minister.

"Miss Lincoln, I did not come here today to be treated rudely, or to be neglected for a lot of geese and their antics, or for a vicious cat. I came here to warn you as a friend not to join the Romish Church. My arguments seem to have availed nothing with you. I am going," he said, as he rose to depart. "But I have one last



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appeal to make to you. Your father and mother and old Mr. Atwood have all gone over to the shining shore. And O, it will grieve them to know that you have become a Romanist. I beg of you, for your mother's sake, Miss Lincoln, consider well."

"Mr. Hawkins, stay a moment, and when I am done then you can go. And never come back here, or I may sue you for trespassing. My parents know the truth now, and they are where grief can never come. If the Catholic Church is true, they know it, and will be glad to see me a Catholic. I have listened to you once before this in public, in denunciation of that Church, and now in private you have no more convincing arguments than you ever had. Be kind enough now to leave me. No, — not a word. Good day, sir."

Mr. Hawkins, — yes, the Reverend Josiah A. Hawkins, the hero of the A.P.A., the great Evangelist who is wanted in California for numerous bills which he left unpaid; who is inquired for by the name of "Rooney, the Converted Priest," in Texas, where he posed as a Baptist. Mr. Hawkins, the great Revivalist and Australian Missionary, who fooled the people of Toronto in Canada. Ah yes! The great and only

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Hawkins. He is used to it. He has been dismissed, or else has fled from so many places that now, when he is turned away by a single woman, he sneaks along by the hedge and down the road past the Catholic Church, plotting in his mind what a fine thing it would be to burn the building down some night.

And Clarissa? Grace came in for the afternoon just as Mr. Hawkins left, and she laughed so much at Clarissa's account of the interview that there was no studying to be done. Jumbo in his mistress's lap looked at her when she would imitate the Catholic pronunciamentos of the geese which, by the way, subsided at once after the minister had left. And Grace said:

"He will excommunicate you next Sunday, Clarissa."

"Well, and if he does? I am going to make my First Communion in spite of it," answered Clarissa.

Molly and Peggy Crossman, coming up just then, had to hear an account of it all. Said Peggy:

"What do you think? They had a discussion in the grocery store the other night about the Catholic Religion. And some one objected that the Spaniards, who were all Catholics, had bull

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fighters. And old Mr. Dyer said: 'Well, the Americans have prize fights, which are worse.' Mr. Shephard matched the spirit of the times which ruled the Inquisition with a similar spirit among the Protestants of England under Henry VIII and from Elisabeth down, with its last outbreak in the burning of the convent at Charlestown and the attempt to shoot Mgr. Bedini, Nuncio to Brazil from the Pope. And all the conclusion they could come to was, that two wrongs did not make a right."

"Well, Peggy, I was going to do a little reading in my 'French Novel,' as I shall call it after this. But I can do nothing now, so let us all go in and have a cup of tea."

While they were drinking, Grace said:

"I have been thinking a good deal, Clarissa, about the Home for the Aged in the old Leaford House. Now, if we could have something of the sort here, which would be open to all, no matter what religion they professed, what a grand thing it would be!"

"Yes," put in Peggy, "there is one in Boston, and the Little Sisters of the Poor have it. I was there with Father Crossman the last time he was in the city and the Sisters took us all over it with them. They go out begging for

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their poor old people and give up everything they have to serve them. Father Crossman says there are French ladies with titles among them, but no one knows who they are and never will."

"Well," said Clarissa, "it would be a grand thing to turn this old house into a Home for the Aged, and for us four, you two young girls and we two old maids and Jumbo — for I cannot leave him out — to become Little Sisters of the Poor." Grace laughed.

"And what would become of all your household and its belongings, Clarissa? You know how much you dote on them. The aged people would destroy them all in no time unless you locked them all up. Would you not be lonesome without them?"

"I suppose so, for a while, but I might learn, like the people of whom our Lord speaks in the Gospel, who gave up everything for His sake to forget them. I have been thinking, Grace, that you and I might learn this lesson together. Well, even if we don't study today, Grace, we will say the beads. Let us say them for poor Mr. Hawkins."

That night there was an alarm of fire, and the engines were called out to extinguish the flames which had been seen by Father McSorley issu-



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ing from the pastor's study in the rear of the Congregational Church. There was no damage done to the building proper, but Mr. Hawkins, who had been trying to fill a lighted lamp, was fatally burned. Before he died, he sent for Father McSorley. What happened, no one knew. But in after years some of his people, who had access to his papers and had become Catholics in the meantime, said that they knew him to have been properly called Rooney and that he was once a Catholic. If it were so, indeed, and if Father McSorley, whose lips were sealed, absolved him before he died, the holy angels must have rejoiced over another sinner's doing penance. Sing, ye angels, for the grace of God is flowing down upon the earth in a crimson stream out of the Eternal Heart of the Son of God. Ye, who have prayed for us, rejoice that our names are written in heaven. Pray that they may never be blotted out of its books forever.

CHAPTER XIV

More Converts

HUD up!" said Mrs. Cartwright to the old white mare, as she jerked the reins to increase the animal's speed. "I do believe that there ain't no older horse than this one anywhere in Middlesex Caounty. 'Nd speaking of horses, Mrs. Goodhue, 't kinder med me think of the time when we wuz Protestants and didn't know nothing more 'baout Cath'lies than a settin' hen knows abaout raisin' onions."

Mrs. Goodhue and Mrs. Cartwright were lifelong friends, and had been baptized not long after the lectures in the winter. They were going to see Mrs. Cartwright's sister, who lived in Old Town, and were driving the old white mare which used to be on the Lowell Coach, and which was said to be forty years old. All I can say is, that a white mare was living there thirty years ago and the Lowell Coach never ran any more after 1870.

"Yes," said Mrs. Goodhue, "thet's good. We wuz pretty green 'baout the Catholic Church. 'Nd I guess we don't know all abaout it yit. It's

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awful big, Mis' Cartwright. Mr. Goodhue, he wuz readin' last night aout of the paper abaout Chiny. Wy, Mis' Cartwright, they's millions on us in Chiny, and we hev Chiny Priests too."

"Ha, ha, ha, — Mis' Goodhue, thet's good. Chiny priests. Saounds jest like 's if you'd hit 'em, they'd smash."

"Wa'al, Mis' Cartwright, you do beat all I ever see a-makin' fun."

"I know it. I've larfed my way through life so fur, 'nd I ain't a-goin' to stop now. But, Mis' Goodhue, I'd jest like to be set right daown in Chiny, 'nd see a real Chiny priest a-sayin' Mass. I believe I'd have so many distractions, I wouldn't hear Mass right. Guess we'd be glad to get back again, — what d' you think?"

"I guess so, too," said Mrs. Goodhue. And Mrs. Cartwright shook the reins over "Old White" and cried "Hud up!" and they went jogging along, — two of the most curious Catholics whose acquaintance I ever made.

"Wa'al, Mis' Goodhue, the more I come to know our new religion, the more I can't see why the people in England ever left it. We wuz told that religion must be in the heart, and the Catholic Religion is all in the heart. Naow, Father McSorley, he preached at the late Mass, and I

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guess you wuz to first Mass larst Sunday, wa'n't you, Mis' Goodhue?"

"Yas. I heard Father Crossman preach, 'nd Father McSorley, he said the Mass," she replied.

"Wa'al, Mis' Goodhue, Father McSorley, he took for his tex' the words from Solomon: 'My son, give Me thy heart.' Wa'al, I sh'd think for all the world it was old Mr. Atwood a-preachin' on the same subject, 'cept Father McSorley, he give good reasons for sigus and ceremonies, which Mr. Atwood, he'd never 'low. Father McSorley, he went on to say that the religion that was all on the outside 'nd didn't hev no insides to it wa'ant no better than an Egyptian Mummy or a stuffed deer. Then he 'plied it to the services of the Church, 'nd he did give it to them folks that spend more time in Church gazin' around 'nd thinkin' what they've got on than in payin' attention to what's goin' on up to the front of the Church at the altar. 'Nd next he give it to them folks that talk such an awful lot 'baout their religion 'nd don't do nothin' fur it. 'You've got to put your heart in to it real hard,' he said, ' 'nd take it home with you. Some folks,' says he, 'they jest hang up their religion with their best bunnit 'nd shawl

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and silk dress on Sunday night and don't disturb it till nex' Sunday.' Then he went on to say haow that there was Mass at half past six every day 'nd lots of people let it go. Wa'al, I hain't missed Mass on a week day since I wuz received into the Church, 'nd I ain't a-goin' to, unless I hev to stay at home to get victuals for the men folks. Sally does all that for me naow, 'xcept Sundays, when she goes to first Mass and I go to larst."

"Wa'al, I'm awful sorry I missed a-hearin' of that ar sermon, but I was there in the afternoon on Saturday to Confession and I see Clarissa Lincoln and Grace Buckminster gettin' baptized 'nd makin' their profession of Faith and their Confession," said Mrs. Goodhue.

"Wa'al, I want to know! I should have admired to be there, but I didn't know nothing abaout it till Tuesday. They's sech a lot of converts, that I didn't pretend to keep the run on 'em. Mr. Allard, he's goin' to jine next Sunday, I hear. 'Nd old Mr. Shephard, 'nd Mr. Dyer. Mr. Warren, he's holdin' aout still, but he'll come in. I says to Iry — you know, Mis' Goodhue, I can't call him Paul, nohow; I know "Ira" means 'anger', and it's one of the seven deadly sins, but I can't help it; I mention it when I go

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to Confession. I've called him Iry ever since he wuz a little feller. Wa'al, where wuz I? I says to Iry: 'Ira, can you caount up and see how many of us Yankee folks have jined the Church sense last Feb'uary?' So he wrote 'em all daown and we caounted one hundred and two. They's a lot a-comin', under instruction, too. For Miss Peggy Crossman was in to my haouse the other day to borrow my catechism 'to lend to a friend'. So some one else is on the way. I always used to say to Iry: 'Iry, Clarissy Lincoln, she'll be a Cath'lic'. Becuz she wuz always goin' over to Egan's and Sloan's; 'nd then, she hed her brother — he wuz one, you know. So I ain't supprized at her a bit. I wonder why she didn't come in sooner. Guess she kinder dragged in Grace Buckminster 'long with her, — think?' queried Mrs. Cartwright, as she jerked the reins in a futile attempt to make Old White "Hud up!"

"Wa'al, they is an awful sight on 'em. 'Nd if it keeps on, we'll hev to get a new church. How'd Mr. Shephard come to get in?" asked Mrs. Goodhue.

"O, hain't you heard 'baout that? Wa'al, do tell. It's the interestin'est of 'em all, I guess, 'nd if you'll jest hold the reins so's I can kinder

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hev my mind free of the horse, I'll tell you all ababout it. Wa'al, you see, Iry he wuz to the grocery store last Wednesday night, fur to get me some salt mackerel, so's I could hev it soak all day Thursday for Friday. When he comes home he sets up till most 'leven o'clock a-tellin' on it."

"It's jest like a story aout of a book. Wa'al, you see, his father, old Ezek'l Shephard, (I used to hear my father tellin' on him) he wuz an infidel. He was a Harvard College graduate, too, but he got to readin' Tom Payne, 'nd Voltaire, 'nd Volney's 'Ruins', 'nd when he got married he made an unbeliever aout of his wife. They useter say they wa'ant a minister anywhere raound forty years ago that knew the bible as well as old Mr. Zek'l Shephard. Wa'al, he brought up a big family of children, 'nd they was all raised little infidels. Mr. Shephard, he wouldn't let 'em go to church 'ntil they got old enough to shift for themselves. Every one on 'em died 'cept Mr. Daniel Shephard, so he's the larst on 'em. I remember my husband a-comin' in one day and remarkin' to me that Mr. Shephard had said: 'They was no true religion unless it wuz the Catholic.' Wa'al, as I wuz sayin', Dan'l he kept to his infidelity pretty well.

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When he wuz a young man he useter puzzle Mr. Atwood so's he'd be all mixed up 'nd couldn't say a word. He went to college like his father did, 'nd for a time he begun to go to hear Theodore Parker 'nd Dr. Channing 'nd Dr. Peabody in Boston and Cambridge. But when he come home his father give him a great lecture and he says: 'Dan'l, I ain't long fur this world. I've lived without religion fur nigh sixty years 'nd I've brought you up the same. All these religions here in town is humbugs; if the Christian Religion is true at all, the only form of it is the Catholic. I'd jest as lief you'd be a Catholic, Dan'l, but don't you never fool araound any of the rest of 'em. They ain't true.' And Mr. Dan'l Shephard, he promised not to and he kept to it, too. Wa'al, 'twas him that got the Town Lib'ry goin', and he jest filled up the shelves with every kind uv infidel literature he could get. He useter spend days and days, when he could be free, a-readin' of them books 'nd he had 'em by heart. When Father McSorley first come to town, some one introduced Mr. Shephard to him. The old man looked at him fur a minute and then he says: 'I'm an infi-

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del, Father McSorley. I don't believe in no religion.'

" 'Well,' says Father McSorley, says he, 'I am sorry for that, but it is not going to make me the less of a friend to you, if you care for my friendship.' Mr. Dan'l Shepard put out his hand, and him and Father McSorley useter be the best of friends, though they never talked on religion. 'Twas about a year ago when the Ryan family all had the small pox. Wa'al, no one would go nigh 'em but Clarissy Lincoln 'nd Father McSorley. He wuz with 'em half the time, 'nd useter leave his clothes hangin' on the line near the river, 'nd he'd change them all every time he come and went from Ryan's place. He put three of 'em that died into their coffins and burned up all the beds and things they died in. Clarissy couldn't be there much, 'cause 'twas jest after her brother Sam come home. Wa'al, I heard folks talkin' about it at the time, but it didn't make no impression on me. But it did on Mr. Dan'l Shephard. 'Nd he began after that to put to Father McSorley all the questions he'd puzzled the minister with. Wa'al, Father McSorley, he didn't hev to trouble 't all to answer all them questions. And they wuz sech a lot of 'em, — most ez many ez they wuz critters

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in Noah's Ark. He'd say to Mr. Shephard sometimes: 'Thet puzzling question you put hez been answered by Catholics ever sence there was Christians in the world.' And, abaout the time the Lectures come here, Mr. Shephard had most made up his mind to be a Catholic. When them come he 'tended ev'ry one on 'em, 'nd he put in some questions that he thought would puzzle anybody to the Question Box. But he told 'em all in the grocery store thet 'twa'ant the Lectures nor the answers to the questions that done it. It was jest the prayers of Father McSorley and his people. Father McSorley useter hev prayers said reg'lar for conversions and he made Mr. Shephard a special object of his prayers from the time he met him first, becuz he told him so."

"Wa'al, you don't tell me, Mis' Cartwright! Isn't the grace of God a remarkable thing? To think uv its takin' hold uv an old infidel like Dan'l Shephard 'nd makin' a Catholic aout uv him. Why, I feel like shoutin', jest as the Methodists do in their camp meetin's."

"Thet reminds me of Mathildy Haynes. She wuz a Methodist you remember. Wa'al, she died last week up in New Hampshire. I see it in the paper today," said Mrs. Cartwright.

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"I want to know! Dear me! Wa'al, young people useter live to be a great deal older when we wuz young than they do naow," remarked Mrs. Goodhue sententiously, and then they both laughed at the ridiculousness of the remark.

"I don't know what my sister over to Old Town 'll say to me. I hain't seen her this six months, cuz she can't git aout, and I ain't hed no chance to git away, — what with haouse cleanin' and instructions and I don't know what all. She wuz jest ez bitter ez any of the rest uv us wuz. But I sent her some Tracts and a copy uv Plain Facts, 'nd p'raps she's not so bitter after readin' 'em. She wuz always pretty sot in her ways, wuz my sister Mary Ann, but I could always git raound her by coaxin' her. Wa'al, we'll see," said Mrs. Cartwright reflectively.

"'Nd coaxin' 's the best way. Don't you remember old Mr. Atwood to the first Strawberry Festival we had? Why, the ladies wuz all up in arms abaout him, like a lot of cats with their backs humped up, and jest spittin' like all possessed. But, Mr. Atwood, he'd come and talk to 'em and say: 'You're all good pussy cats, nice pussy cats,' and he'd stroke 'em all down

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with a few kind words of advice and explanation, 'nd they'd all be purrin' as loud so you could hear away down to Billinses," said Mrs. Goodhue.

"Mrs. Goodhue, if you make me larf much more, I'll be so sore thet I'll be in no fit state for visitin' when we git to Old Town," remarked Mrs. Cartwright.

"Wa'al, you began it," said Mrs. Goodhue, as she wiped the tears away from her eyes. "But I won't do it no more. Naow perhaps you can tell me what 'twas thet moved the Stanley family. They're all in 'cept the oldest gal, 'nd she's hangin' aout like a lonesome dish rag on a bush of a rainy day, thet's been forgotten. Must be terrible for her to go to the 'Piscopal Church all alone. I don't s'pose there's more than twenty-five people goin' there naow. They're a-goin' to shet it up after the summer and Mr. Moffet is goin' away. Some say he's goin' to be a Catholic. But you can't depend on what everybody says."

"Wa'al, Mis' Wilkins, she wuz in to see me yesterday, 'nd she told me a funny story 'baout the Stanleys. 'T seems, when Mis' Stanley wuz a young girl — you remember, Mis' Goodhue, how she went to Europe same time as Grace

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Buckminster did — wa'al, they went to Rome — my, how we useter shiver once, when we heard that word! — and they went to see the Pope. Mrs. Stanley wuz educated in New York and she could speak French. So the Pope — it wuz Pope Pius in 1860 — he asked her who she wuz, 'nd she said: 'We're all Protestants.' 'Nd he said: 'You'll all be Catholics some day.' 'Nd he hed a lot uv rosaries, 'nd he blessed 'em, five on 'em, and gave 'em each one. And naow they're all Catholics."

"Wa'al, speakin' uv rosaries, haven't we talked long enough? 'Spose we say the rosary for the next mile, 'nd thet'll bring us to Old Town."

So let us leave these two devout old matrons to finish their journey, and come back to Clarissa and Grace.

The grace of the Month of May was to Clarissa one of great peace. She and Grace Buckminster had been examined by Father McSorely, and the day was now past and over on which they had made their First Communion. It was in the evening, just at twilight, that the two were sitting together silently, thinking over the events of the past and of the Sacred Day just closing when Clarissa, roused from her rev-



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erie by some barking dog in the distance, said:

“Grace, the events of the day are too sacred for us to touch upon except with reverence. And there has come into my soul today a new feeling that I have not known before I would tell it to no else but you except Father Mc-Sorely. Years ago, before I was born, my mother, hoping I was to be a boy, dedicated me to God, ‘to serve Him in His Sanctuary,’ as Anna did with Samuel. She told me of this when I was grown, and I have tried to be as one devoted to God. So I began to relieve the poor and help them, and it has been the work of my life, and I hope it will be. A new feeling has now come to me, and it is this: That I must give up all for God. I do not know yet what way will be shown to me, for some way I know is soon to be open, and I hope you will pray for me to walk in it to the end. I expect it is the religious vocation, to go to the Church, and there try to follow the Counsels of the Gospels.”

“Yes, Clarissa,” answered Grace. “This, I am sure, grows out of your whole life. You have been a Sister of Charity all your life, even though you had no vows. And you have the

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spirit of it all renewed, or rather, quickened, today by the sacraments you have received. I am not surprised. Indeed, I should have been surprised at anything else to come to such as you are on this day thrice blessed for us both. But still, there is one thing to be thought of. If you go away to be a sister, who will look out for your poor here, and who will take your place among them?"

"You are forgetting for the moment, dear Grace, that God has the poor in His keeping and He has no need of us in caring for them. If He should call me away from here, He would put someone else better than I am to take my place. But such things are for the future and, when the time comes, we will look into the necessities. At present my desire is very strong to give my life to Him entirely, if He would have it. So I commend myself tonight to you and your prayers, that God will show me the way, and keep me in patience until the time comes when I can enter upon it."

But some of our readers are anxious to know more about the reception into the Church and the circumstances that surrounded it. The little Church had been full of people preparing for

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Holy Communion on Pentecost Sunday, all of Saturday afternoon.

At three o'clock Clarissa and Grace arrived at the church and, having removed their hats, put on long white veils and, going to the altar rail, read the Profession of Faith before the crowd of people. After they had made their Confession, they came to the Font and were baptized conditionally by Father McSorely. Mrs. Egan, the daughter-in-law of old Mrs. Egan, stood sponsor for Clarissa, and Peggy Crossman did the same for Grace.

There were sobs, and tears flowed freely from the eyes of those who witnessed those two coming, like little children for the first time, to a good father's house to receive his welcome. And many were the Acts of Thanksgiving, and promises of Rosaries were kept, by the faithful ones who for twenty years kept up their prayers for "the angel-lady," as they affectionately called Clarissa. The church was a beautiful sight, with the gay blossoms that decked its humble altar the following morning. But the splendor of the Sacred Host, Who welcomed these two to His home, was seen to the angels alone, and only reflected rays shone out upon the two.



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O, ye guardians of men, sing aloud today and praise the Most High. And you, who have charge of this one whose career we follow with wondering eyes, still be faithful to show us how she follows your leading. You shall see her soon going hence to other scenes and labors in the world, and you may have to follow her amid trials and contradictions in other lands and in the midst of strangers. It may be said that she is to be found worthy to be crucified with Him who asks us to "Watch with Him one hour." O, glorious guardian, if such be her destiny, you know her needs, and will gain for her from the Blessed Mother and her divine Son the graces she will need to carry her through it all to a great and glorious triumph. Ye, who have the welfare of the Church in your guardian hands under your Queen, by title of Mary conceived without sin, in this beloved land of ours, where the Church finds a free and undisturbed home; to you we turn, guardians of nations and of states, regions, towns, families and individual people; as you have done great wonders in this little place, so continue to do, not only here, but in all the land.

CHAPTER XV

Old Memories

THERE is a full session of the council in Warren's store tonight. Mr. Dyer is in the chair, for Mr. Shephard has gone to Boston on business. Si Haynes, Luke Hastings, Ira Cartwright, Joe Adams, Abner Crump and Tom Reilly are all in their chairs. And, seated on the counters and on nail kegs are a dozen more; some, converts; some, under instruction; and some, still hanging back, not yet having the grace of God to go forward.

"Wa'al, Mr. Dyer," said Abner Crump, "I guess the change thet's come over us Yankees in this here town in the last year is the most extrordinary thing thet's happened sence the town wuz settled."

"Yes, Abner. You're abaout right. I've lived here, boy 'nd man nigh sixty-nine years, 'nd they hain't nothin' happened like it. Ef I hed dreamed it, I'd a larfed when I woke up. My Goodness! Me to be a Catholic!" replied Mr. Dyer.

"Yas," said Si. "We thought Catholics wuz

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all pagans. 'Nd the ministers preached thet they wuz, too. Course we believed it."

"Well, Tom," said Joe Adams, "near every Sunday Mr. Atwood used to pray after this style: 'O great and glorious Jehovah, send the light of Thy countenance to the poor, benighted Catholics who live in idolatry and are entangled in the errors and corruptions of Rome. Bring them to see the Gospel and to know that they can be saved by faith alone.' "

"The poor old man," said Tom. "And he wuz sincere, too, I believe."

"Sincere! Jest ez sincere and true wuz old Mr. Atwood ez a hen is a-settin' on duck eggs. I guess, when he woke up and faound aout haow he'd been deceived, he must a ben suprised," said Abner. " 'Nd he wuz a good man, too. He raised a big family o' children, 'nd the Atwood girls all done well. He kinder mellered aout 'long the larst part of his life towards the Catholics. Stead o' prayin' fur us ez pagans, he prayed that God 'would make 'em all good, upright citizens.' I hear tell that he hed daoubts the larst few months, but I guess they ain't no one knows."

"Wa'al, our ignorance wuz amazin' them days. 'Nd there wuz the true religion right

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under our noses, 'nd we didn't know nothin' 'baout it," said Si. "They wuz many a time I useter wonder what they wuz a-doin' up to the Catholic Church o' Sundays. But then, we wa'ant to blame. Haow could we help it? The Catholic folks, they never said nothin' 'baout their religion to us, an' we never asked them nothin' 'baout it. So there it wuz. Guess that air Mr. Hawkins he done ez much ez anyone to start things."

"Mr. Dyer," said Abner, "I kinder think thet you could tell us haow the hull thing came abaout, better 'n anyone here. What's your opinion of the changes?"

"Wa'al, gentlemen, if you want to know what I think is the real reason why this here town is Catholic, it'll take me most the hull evenin' to tell it."

"All right, Mr. Dyer, we'll listen," was the chorus.

"The Protestant Religion has only one doctrine to it, and thet is, *Daown with the Pope o' Rome!* Soon's they give thet doctrine up, they's no arthly reason for them. They oughter be either infidels or Catholics. Martin Luther, 'nd John Calvin, 'nd Queen 'Lizabeth wuz all opposed to Rome, 'nd long's they kept it up

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their religions done pretty well. But, soon's they begun to treat Catholics as feller Christians, then the passing bell of Protestantism begun to toll 'nd the funeral to set aout fer the cemetery."

" 'Twuz infidels in the time of the Revolutionary War that wuz among the fust thet proposed anything like liberty of conscience here. The Catholics had it in Maryland a hundred years before. It wuz a knock-out blow when George Washington made the soldiers stop ridiculing St. Patrick on the 17th of March. Then when the Continental Congress went to Mass in a body in Philadelphia, it only inspired the wrath of men like Benedict Arnold the Traitor. Then they wuz a few converts begun to come in, one here 'nd one there, 'nd people see thet the Catholic Religion wa'ant jest ez bad ez they'd brought up to think it wuz.

" 'Long in the thirties there came the Know Nothing Movement, 'nd they burned the convent in Charlestown. They wuz egged by the ministers, else they'd never a done it. But they wuz told thet in thet air convent wuz all the abominations of the bottomless pit and a few more, invented by the Bishop of Boston. So, one night after dark, they drove over from

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Boston and drove aout the poor nuns and their pupils, robbed everything in the place 'nd then set fire to it. Human justice never overtook anyone, but the Justice of God followed everyone who had a hand in thet awful proceedin'.

"They wuz one man there. 'Nd he got inter the chapel 'nd stole the Blessed Sacrament. He emptied it aout of the vessel it wuz kept in inter his coat pocket. Wa'al, he was inter a saloon drinkin' the same evenin' when an Irish Catholic came in. The poor wretch he puts his hand in his pocket and takes aout one of the Sacred Hosts. 'Nd sez he to the Irishman:

" 'Say, I've got your God in my coat pocket, — see!' 'Nd he held it aout to him. In a moment he wuz seized with awful pains in his stomach 'nd run roaring into the street. The Irishman found him writhing with pain and dying. He cut the pocket out of the coat, and, wrapping it carefully in his handkerchief, carried it to the nearest Church in Boston. This man died eaten by worms, and many of those who lived suffered awfully in life, and death came to them with great pain, or so suddenly they had no time to prepare fer it.

"Then come the next persecution, abaout twenty years later. The subject wuz brought up



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before the United States Senate, but it all ended in talk, while churches and convents were burned in various places.

“One of the funniest things yeou ever heard wuz abaout the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy in Providence. The ministers were at the bottom of the plot ez usual, which wuz to burn the convent 'nd put the Nuns to flight. They came from far and near. 'Nd they hed a big banquet all ordered at the hotel, to be eated after the fatiguing work of destruction hed been accomplished.

“Old Bishop Tyler, he heard the news beforehand, 'nd he called on the mayor to help him defend the convent. Wa'al the mayor, he hedn't got much backbone, but the bishop compelled him to come thet night 'nd face the crowd. Just adjoining the convent wuz a large garden, where the sisters useter walk and enjoy the fresh air. A large gate, barred from without, used to admit teams, 'nd wuz close to the end of the building. If anyone hed been watching the convent thet afternoon, they would have wondered at seeing so many men goin' in at the door and so few comin' aout. Some hed axes, some hed hatchets; some hed shot guns, and many hed



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nothin' but clubs; but they wuz ready ter fight, if necessary.

“Wa'al, after dark, 'long 'baout eight or so, the ministers they set aout with their mob fer the convent. They went along singin' through the streets until they come to the convent door, when they begun to shaout — wa'al, never mind what. The mayor, he wuz on the steps of the convent, and Bishop Tyler wuz beside him. So they asked the people what they wanted, and they told 'em they come to burn the convent daown.

“ ‘Wa'al,' says the mayor, ‘you better all go home. In this here garden are five hundred desperate Irishmen, armed to the teeth. And, ef you lay hand on this here property, they will defend it with their lives. Nor will I be responsible for the results.’ The cowardly crowd sneaked off, 'nd there wasn't no burnin' nor ne banquet, neither.”

CHAPTER XVI

Changes

“WELL,” said Tom Reilly, “it’s wonderful all the changes that have come about this town since I was born. You would have thought in those days that there was never to be any future for the Catholics. We had a little bit of a church in an out-of-the-way corner of the town, and a sort of tumble-down affair, too. For we were poor and it took all we had to support our families and then have enough to make up a decent purse for Old Father Walsh at Christmas and Easter, — let alone building and paying for the “new church,” which was more like a new barn. And now see the changes.”

“Yes,” said old Mr. Dyer, “ef you hed prophesied to me, Mr. Reilly, a year ago, of all that would take place that had happened the last twelve months, I’d have said that you were crazy. Why, during the war all the churches in taown used to be filled every Sunday, morning and afternoon. Along abaout 1870 was when they begun to stop going. I often said to some

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of them, who hed parents who never missed going to meeting Sunday: 'Haow is it you don't go to church any more?' And the reply was that they could worship God at home jest as well as listening to sermons like what Mr. Wildman was preaching to the Unitarians in their church; or such old fashioned doctrine as Mr. Atwood was giving at the Orthodox. And so the membership dropped off until there was only about seventy-five in the Congregational Church and they had to mortgage the building to pay Mr. Atwood's salary. Then there come along that man Hawkins, and he drew out pretty nigh all those who hedn't left already, so the church was closed."

"Do you know where the mortgage is held, Mr. Dyer?" asked Tom, as he sat on the counter of the old store, making a toothpick out of a match.

"No, I don't. And I guess it will be a big loss for the people who hold it. What can you do with a big church like that left on your hands for five thousand dollars?"

"I'll tell you, Mr. Dyer," said Tom, "what we can do with it. We can pull down the pulpit, and put up an altar, and have the bishop come and bless it."

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"Humph! What are you talking about, Mr. Reilly? How are we Catholics going to get hold of it? The trustees would never sell it to us."

"They don't need to. Mr. Crossman holds the mortgage, and he has foreclosed on them, and Father McSorely bought it for the balance due on the mortgage, which is just two thousand dollars," said Tom enthusiastically.

"Then it is Mr. Crossman who held the mortgage on that church property? Wa'al, wa'al, I want to know! And he's sold it for two thousand dollars? Why, in 1848 it cost fifteen thousand dollars to build that church and the organ cost twenty-five hundred. Then, there are the stained glass windows and the bell and the pews. There are dozens of other things that would bring the cost of it up to twenty-five thousand dollars, and this is all going to us for two thousand dollars! I'll be one of the first to put my name down, Tom, so you can come raound to me with your subscription list."

"How much shall I put you down for, Mr. Dyer?" asked Tom, taking a note book out of his pocket.

"Two hundred dollars," said he.

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"Put me down for the same, Tom," cried Mr. Shephard.

"I'll give you a hundred," said Mr. Warren, the storekeeper.

"Good!" said Tom. "There's five hundred already. I am down for two hundred myself, which makes seven hundred. Ira, what are you going to do?"

"Well, Tom, you can put mother and me down for a hundred each," he replied. "We can do better than that in a few months' time."

"Joe Adams, — how is your bank account now-a-days? Will you give fifty dollars?"

"Yes, and fifty more, to make the total up to one thousand," he replied.

Just then, in came Clarissa and her friend Grace, and to them Tom made statements that raised the list up to fifteen hundred dollars. Clarissa took her check book and wrote her check for two hundred and fifty and Grace did the same. Then everyone was looking for blank forms of checks and notes, and soon Tom had the fifteen hundred dollars in his pocket. Before ten o'clock he had collected, in cash and checks, the whole amount.

"Well, we are a great people when we set out to do anything," remarked Mr. Shephard.

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"Here we are with a new church, and all paid for, too, in one evening. Mr. Reilly, what do you think Father McSorely will say?"

"Well," said Tom, "I wouldn't have thought of asking for anything, unless I had asked him about it beforehand. He was to see me at the house this morning, and I said that I thought we could raise the two thousand dollars without any trouble to him. So he said I might try and see what could be done, and I think with you, Mr. Shephard, we are a great people."

"Tom," said Ira Cartwright, "whenever you are going to give Father McSorely that money, I want to be there."

"So do I!" said every one else.

"Well, then, tomorrow afternoon, after Vespers, about five o'clock, we will present it to him," said Tom.

A week after this work was begun on the old Congregational Church. An altar was erected where once the people had seen a pulpit. The railing was put up and a Sanctuary formed. Stations of the Cross were moved over, and in a month the old "Orthodox Meeting House" was a Roman Catholic Church.

Then the old Carey estate opposite the church came into the market, with its great roomy



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house and five acres of land. This, too, was bought by the people for Father McSorely, and the house where the writer of this story often played as a Protestant child now hears the words of the Divine Office and the Rosary from the lips of its inmates. The old church has become a hall for young men. The Knights of Columbus use the Unitarian Church, which they have bought for a meeting place.

The people and Father McSorely are hand in hand in every good work and there are lots of them. The Catholics were in the majority in town when it was decided to lease the Public School Building to the Catholic Church for one year. The question was this: "Either we must build a Catholic School ourselves, and then have to close the public school for lack of attendance; or we must let the building to the Catholic Church." It was decided by a vote of 676 to 10 that the school building should be let, and a canvass of names showed that there were only twenty non-Catholic children in the town when this was done. So long as they went to school they had a room by themselves where they could receive "Education without Religion," according to the fallacious theory of some pedagogues of those days. But they grad-

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ually left this room for the regular rooms in the school, either because they became Catholics with their parents or because it made no difference to their parents if they did learn religion in the school. This change in the town did not take place until several years after the time this story is supposed to close.

It was in the autumn, when King Frost comes to kiss the Maiden Maples and make them blush, or else cause them to grow sallow and yellow with anger, when old Isiah Haynes, who lived next to Father McSorely and was the father of Si, was recounting memories of the "old times," before "everybody was Catholics."

"Why, Samuel Upham, so everlastingly did I hate the Catholics in those days thet I wuz more 'n half crazy one mornin' when I come out in my back yard 'nd see a tall, lank Catholic priest a-stalkin' up and daown in Father McSorely's yard, smokin' away at a clay pipe. It jest riled me all up ter see him, fur I thought then thet all priests wuz bad. So I went up to the fence 'nd looked at him. 'Nd when he came 'long by, he stopped and said, real pleasant: 'Good mornin', sir.' But I wasn't goin' to be moved by thet. So says I: 'Be you a man, or be you a woman?' Wa'al, 'twas an all-fired foolish re-

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mark for me to make, 'nd I wuz sorry ez soon ez I done it. He stood a-lookin' at me fer a minit, 'nd then he took his pipe aout uv his maouth, 'nd spit, 'nd sez he: 'Wa'al, wha'd yer think?' Wa'al, I jest had ter larf. 'Nd then he larfed. Sez I: 'I guess you be a Yankee, ain't yer?' Sez he: 'Wha'd yer think?' Then I hed to larf again. 'Nd I sez: 'I'm real sorry I asked yer thet first question. But you see, I never hed much opinion of priests, 'nd you're the first one I ever spoke to.' 'O,' sez he, 'thet's all right. Never mind.' Then he invited me ter come up ter the Catholic Church that night. He told me his name, and haow he came from the upper end of the caounty, 'nd who his father wuz, 'nd all about himself. I told Corinthy when I come in, 'nd she sez: 'Beware, Isiah, them priests is awful cunnin' to ketch folks unawares.' But I sez to Corinthy: sez I, 'He's a Yankee, 'nd he ain't got no Irish in him.' Sez she: 'So much the wuss. To think of one of the children descended from the Pilgrim Fathers, pr'aps, turn-in' a Catholic priest. I might hev some deal-in's with an Irish priest, but you might ez well talk to me abaout black snow as 'baout a Yankee bein' a priest. 'Tain't right, Isiah, 'nd don't you go fooling raound them Catholics, or

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you will be under the Pope of Rome, and then — good-bye!’ ”

“Do you remember Mr. Capen, who lived over in the north part of the taown, Mr. Haynes?” asked Mr. Upham, while a crowd of men and boys gathered round to listen.

“Wa'al, there ain't much of anyone who ever did live here sence I know anything, that I don't remember. Why, I was hayin' up in the field next to his'n when the thunder storm came up 'nd struck his barn and burned it daown. I rode inter town ter git “Old Torrent,” the fire engine. But 'twa'ant no use, the barn wuz all gone when we got back. Mr. Capen he jest got the insurance renewed the day before. I know him. He died the day General Grant was inaugurated his larst term,” said Mr. Haynes.

“Wa'al, way back in 1857, when Buchanan was President of the United States, he come over to our haouse one night a-collectin' taxes. He wuz tax collector fer fifty years. Wa'al, father, he paid up, 'nd then Mr. Capen begun to talk 'baout the Irish a-comin' to Taown. ‘We can't help it,’ sez he, ‘nohaow. It's too late. But I can see haow it's a-goin' to be, and I can read the signs of the times. These here Irish always hez big families, 'nd awful big ones,

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too; fourteen and fifteen and sixteen on 'em ez often ez not. Us Yankees used to have the same until it began to be fashionable a few years ago not to hev so many.

“It's a goin' on, until in fifty years there'll be more people in this very taown who'll be Catholic and Irish than Yankee and Protestant. 'The Yankee boys will begin to marry Irish gals; 'nd then they'll turn Catholic, 'nd there'll be hull families of Irish Catholic children. Then at larst there'll be such a handful of Yankee people left thet the Catholics will have everything their own way. 'Sam,' sez he to me — I wuz abaout fifteen — 'you'll live to be old enough to see it p'raps, 'nd you'll remember what I say. Mebbe you'll be a Catholic yourself, Sam, 'nd go to church in the old Meetin' Haouse where we all go naow.' It's a comin', Mr. Upham, for the sins of the Yankee people is great and many. 'Nd the Lord hez sent these people here to eat up 'nd devaour the substance of the land and make it all their own. If the people of New England hed been honest to a man, ez they wuz in the fust days of the colony, before Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr 'nd Tom Payne did their wicked work, we might hev held up against the Roman Catholics. But naow the

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evil hez gone too deep to be cured, 'nd though a remnant shall be saved of the Yankee people, even they will be all Catholics. They'll be a convent right here in this here Taown in them days; 'nd every one here 'll be glad of it, because they'll all be Roman Catholics.'

"Wa'al, my father, he jest larfed 'nd said: 'Mr. Capen, what's the matter with you? The Age of Prophecies is gone, I thought.'

"'I ain't a-prophecyin',' sez he. 'I'm only a-tellin' you what anyone who looks into things and don't skim over their surface can see with half an eye. When people begin to quit goin' to meetin', 'nd begin to say *One religion's ez good ez another*, then you can look aout for the very thing I've been a-tellin' you abaout. In them days, Mr. Upham, they will be sendin' missionaries to convert the Yankees, 'nd they'll do it too. Our religion's goin' to die aout 'nd be no more. But, it's no use talkin', — you can't kill the Catholic Religion.'

"Wa'al, we've lived to see part of old Mr. Capen's prophecy come true, 'nd we're both Catholics naow. I wouldn't want to take to prophesyin', but there's one thing certain sure, — thet we Catholics 'll hev all the people into the Church in a few years, if things keep on, 'nd

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there'll be a Catholic Republic. Wa'al, I do hope that won't be like some countries, where all the people is good Catholics 'xcept them thet hez the runnin' of the Government. Government here's always kept its hands off the Church, 'nd it's better it should. Let us support the Church and the Government both, 'nd let each go its own way in peace, without interferin' with one another," concluded Mr. Haynes.

"Speakin' of changes 'nd things," said Mr. Warren the store keeper, "I hed a letter from my sister up in New Hampshire. 'Nd she tells me the most amazin' stories abaout what Catholic folks is a-doin' up there. Over in the next taown to where she's livin' they useter be a Shaker settlement. Wa'al, they all died aout, 'nd they wa'ant no heirs, so they left it all to the Taown. But the Taown wanted some one to look after it who'd be a credit to them. So they hed a big time over it, 'nd at larst they voted in Taown meetin' to invite some Monks from Kentucky 'nd Iowa to settle there. They sent 'em pictures of the buildin's, 'nd the reports abaout the land, 'nd what you can raise. Wa'al, the result of it wuz, thet a dozen on 'em come at larst 'nd settled down. 'Nd they've made thet



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little Taown jest thrive. They're the best farmers ever you see, 'nd sister, she's a-goin to send me a barrel of apples off the convent farm. They take care of all the poor people, 'nd they've got a school for boys, all free, 'nd they ain't no tax to speak of in the place. If old Cotton Mather could know all thet's a-goin' on here in this land, he'd turn over in his grave."

Changes came with a rush at the last, though the beginning was gradual. The water rises higher and higher, and when it rises to a certain point, away goes the badly-built dam to destruction. So it was with the introduction of the Catholic Religion into the United States. Protestantism, its only foe, had declared that Catholicity might be tolerated. This sounded the death knell of the dam that had been built to stem the flood of Catholicity in the New World. More and more grew their numbers, louder and louder sounded their voices in the pulpit and on the platform, farther and farther spread the truth of the Catholic Religion among the people.

At last the dam of opposition burst, and with a mighty rush the Catholic Religion spread everywhere. Converts were numbered by the thousands, and in ten years twenty new dioceses



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had to be made, to keep pace with the needs of the people. New England became the base of operations for missionary work which spread over the whole country and is not yet finished.

CHAPTER XVII

Clarissa's Vocation

IT was a great day for the little town when the archbishop came to bless the church, where many of the Catholics had attended worship on "Sabbath" mornings in earlier days. One could hardly know it was the same building. The cross on the spire had been gilded; the altar had taken the place of the pulpit, and the two new, beautiful side-altars, in honor of the Sacred Heart and St. Joseph, had been put in their places. The walls had been tinted a light brown, and the pews were fresh and clean with new paint and varnish. The old organ was tuned and cleaned.

When the procession left the old church on Sunday morning, there were forty priests present, together with the archbishop. They marched through the streets of the town — and no one said them nay — up to the hill where stood their beautiful church. Then it was blessed, and the archbishop preached a sermon which will not be forgotten in the town for many years to come.



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"One thing I desired of the Lord, that I should dwell in the courts of the Lord's house all my life long," was the text of the sermon.

The archbishop spoke on sacrifice and self-denial as being essential to religion, and first he praised those who had given up their native land to seek a place where, though in exile, they might worship God according to their conscience and not after the dictates of a tyrant under the pseudonym of "Law." Having then given a short history of the persecution of Irish Catholics by the government of Great Britain, he said:

"And we also have this morning a large number of the descendants of those who fled in the first quarter of the seventeenth century from the same tyrant. They came here, it is true, with great zeal and a zeal worthy of a better cause. But they were hunted thither as they themselves hunted the beasts of the forest. They suffered, and exiled themselves to find freedom; for this we can honor them. They were, in a great measure, the founders of the republic under which we come to live. You, who are their descendants, have come back to the old Church from which they were driven at the point of the bayonet in the days of Eliza-

seen through great trials and suffering, and now you have come to this place. It was as if you were going into an unknown country, to meet a new and strange people. Many of you are in a new land, and had habits of religion formed in your old country, which had to be put off for new ones. Some of you have accepted the thing which you were taught to reject; has learned to love that which was taught to hate; and to respect that which was taught to despise. Such a process entails sufferings of heart and soul, and it is not those who have been through them who can understand or appreciate. Who but those who have the anxious hours of thought, the night without sleep, and the days without happiness, when the truth first came to your knowledge: 'The Catholic Church is the only true Church of Christ.' But you rose superior to these sufferings, and out of suffering and pain there came a new and peace that have been yours ever since.



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older Catholics, whose ancestors were never robbed of the faith, there has not been a vocation either to the convent or to the Church. I know that there is one priest from this town, but he came to us out of the land of error by the mercy of God. Now, my dear children, is there not one among you who desires to stand at the altar to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass? Who would wish to preach the word of God with such effect as those two men of God preached it here last February? I shall expect before long to have a young man from this parish kneel before me to receive the divine Sacrament of the Priesthood. And I charge your pastor here to-day in presence of you all, to foster and cherish the idea that may spring up in any young boy's heart to join the sacred ranks of the clergy.

“If you wish to do so, tell your pastor in confession, and seek the means to go to such a place of education as may fit you for the calling you have chosen. But bury your desire in your heart, as the Divine Voice speaking to you, and do not make it common to everyone in the world.

“There is not a Sister in the convent, so I am told, who came from this town. No doubt you have been jealous to keep them all at home, for

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your needs were many. Now is the time of plenty. Your barns are bursting with the harvest and the reapers are coming home with new sheaves daily. Now is the time to give generously to the Lord of the great abundance wherewith He hath blessed you. We need good Sisters and many of them in our schools to teach the young, to protect the aged, to care for the sick and the orphans; and I could put a hundred of them to work tomorrow, if I had them. Cannot some of your girls come forward to give up all for God, who gave up His Life for you on the cross?

“There has never been an age in the Church when young maidens were not devoted to God in virginity, holy and perpetual; hoping not for an earthly reward but for the reward that fails not, — eternal in heaven.

“‘He that hath given up father and mother, and houses and lands for My sake shall receive a hundredfold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting.’ Boys and girls, this is the life, and this the reward held out to those who are called to follow it. If any of you hear the call in your soul, then God be thanked, for my words this day shall have fallen on good ground.”



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Then the archbishop went on to speak of charity to the poor, aged, sick and orphans. He told of the work that had been done in the city, and that if he only had the means he would establish a place in the country for the orphans. It was a sermon that went to the heart of everyone in the church and of course to the heart of Clarissa, whose whole Catholic life had been filled with this desire. Now the time had come. It remained only for her to speak to the Bishop, and everything would be accomplished at once.

So she wrote a little note to Father McSorley after she got home from Mass, asking him to call on Monday, with the bishop, if possible. The Archbishop had proposed to return to Boston on Monday, but a hint from Father McSorley was enough, and he put it off. As they were driving up to Clarissa's place, the Archbishop said:

"That is an ideal site for a country house for my orphans."

"Well," said Father McSorley, "it belongs to one of my convert parishioners. Perhaps you may be able to get it cheap."

"O no," sighed the Archbishop, "I cannot now purchase any more. If I get this or any place, I must get it as a gift. My, what great

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piners and maple trees these are! It is a great place indeed."

"Yes, and it is inhabited by one who is a queen among women," replied Father McSorely. And then he told the archbishop what Clarissa was to his people.

"Your Grace, she has something to tell you. I know not for certain what it may be, though I suspect. She is forty years of age, rich, single, and I think she has a vocation."

After the first greetings were over, Clarissa began by asking:

"Your Grace, I am an old maid of forty. Am I too old to become a Sister in some convent?"

"No, not if I say the word," he replied.

"That is good," answered Clarissa. "I have longed, ever since I was received, to give my life up to God with the nuns in the convent. So now, if your Grace is favorable to me, I may see this wish of my heart realized."

"Your Grace," said Father McSorely, "Miss Lincoln will pardon me if I tell you something of her history." So he began and told of the life of charity she had led; how she had carried him in her sleigh to the sick call at the Egan's; how she had attended the sick, had buried the dead, had relieved poverty, instructed the ig-

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norant, how she had reformed more than one who had gone astray through drink. He told how she had exposed her life to danger on more than one occasion to save the life of others, as, for example, her heroic conduct toward the poor Ryans when the small-pox was devastating their family. Then, while Clarissa would have protested, he told the archbishop of her studies, especially on the Catholic Religion, and paid a good tribute to her for all the good qualities she possessed.

Then the archbishop said to Clarissa:

"If all these things are so, and you don't seem able to deny the truth of them, you certainly have a religious spirit. But, if you enter a convent, all this must be given up, — the house, and lands, and money."

"Your Grace," replied Clarissa, "I have never cared for these things except as by means of them I could help those who are not so fortunate as I, and I can be content with very little, I am sure, leaving all my property here to my poor ones. Since I heard your sermon yesterday, I have resolved to make you an offer. I offer you this house, and the farm of three hundred acres of land, to be a perpetual home for the orphans you spoke of yesterday. I have

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money enough invested to build a new home for them, for I do not suppose the old house here would do."

The archbishop was surprised and he could scarcely speak, for this was the one thing he had been praying for, for months. He accepted the offer and Clarissa, in the same old Yankee way, said:

"Well, I will have my lawyer call upon your Grace in Boston in a few days. Now, in the meantime, cannot a few of the Sisters bring some of the orphans out here to recruit? I have cots for twenty, and beds for as many Sisters; and I can confer with them and learn something about the every-day life of a Sister, which I know only from books."

"Yes, it can be done," replied the archbishop. "But, perhaps we had better postpone any transfer of property until such time as you have made a definite decision as to what community you will enter."

After this Clarissa invited them to see the property. The farm, the barns and the orchards were carefully inspected. The old house was gone over from top to bottom; a site was chosen where there might be an orphanage built in the future; and, after a good dinner, they departed,



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assuring Clarissa that there would be four or five Sisters of Charity and twenty orphan boys there on Thursday morning about eleven o'clock.

Grace Buckminster came that same day, and the two were busy until dark putting cots in order and arranging many little details, so as to save the Sisters any trouble when they arrived. The big barge was at the station at half past eleven when the train came in, and twenty boys crowded into it, under the charge of the Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg. Away they drove through the town and past the church to the Lincoln estate, to find a great dinner ready and hot, waiting for them. I think Clarissa was glad that the great brick oven was in order and that she knew how to use it. For it was very handy during the weeks that the children stayed with her.

One afternoon when all the boys had gone to play ball, Clarissa was seated, talking with Sister Catherine, who had been sent in charge of the other Sisters and the boys.

"You can find all you want of hardship, trial and mortification in our community, for we never have more than enough. Many of our places are really poor, and we suffer from the

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lack of much that is really necessary. So you can have all you want with us," said Sister Catherine.

"That I can find anywhere in any religious community. But, do the Sisters of your order go anywhere except to places in the United States and Canada?" asked Clarissa.

"No, Miss Lincoln, they do not. We have no houses outside the country. Mother Seton seems to have founded a community which up to the present has had no foreign missions," she replied.

"Then, can you tell me of some order in which I can be pretty well assured of being sent out of this country, never to see it again?" asked Clarissa. The Sister looked at her wistfully, and the tears stood in her eyes.

"Yes, there is one order of this kind here in this country. They are called *The Little Sisters of the Poor*. If you should join them, you would have to go to Paris, but they would probably never send you here again; but perhaps to Australia or England or South America."

"That is what I want," said Clarissa. "I would like to give up, not only my home here but my native land also, and go away among strangers. It is what our Lord did, and He asks



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of us to do the same. Where are these Little Sisters of the Poor?"

"They have a home in Boston and they care for the poor old people, no others. They beg their way in the world and are sent out daily from their convents on the quest for food, clothing or money, as people may wish to give them. They serve the poor, waiting on them at table and nursing them in their illness until they die. O, it is a wonderful vocation to be a Little Sister of the Poor," said Sister Catherine.

The ordinary dream is but a farrage of nonsense in which no sensible man puts any faith. But we know from Holy Scripture, and perhaps some of us from our own experience, that God not unfrequently uses this strange faculty of dreaming for purposes of His own.

In Clarissa's case the dream of years ago, when Mrs. Egan prophesied she was to be a nun, had never left her memory; and since she became a Catholic it had become more than ever fresh in her mind. She was silent on the subject even to Sister Catherine, for she said:

"These are not the nuns I saw in my dream." But after the Sisters had been installed in the house for a week, and the boys were getting rosy-cheeked and stouter-limbed, Clarissa re-

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solved to take a trip to Boston and hunt up the Little Sisters of the Poor and see what they were like. She asked Peggy Crossman to go with her, as she had been there before and could introduce her.

It was somewhat of a shock to Clarissa, even though she was not unprepared for it, when she saw the Superior and recognized the dress of the Sisters of her dream twenty years before. But she kept her own counsel about that and inquired closely into the work which the Sisters did and as to the life they led.

The visit to the house and the "old people" was very pleasing to Clarissa, and confirmed her in the opinion that these Sisters were the ones she was called to join. So, after asking a few questions about the novitiate and where subjects were sent after they were professed, and finding that Sister Catherine had told her about all that she could find on the spot, Clarissa determined to set the springs in motion that should land her in a convent of the Little Sisters of the Poor. She stopped on the way to the station and left money at a church for a Novena of Masses for her intention. When she came home she hastened to Father McSorely and told him of her idea and gave him all the



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inner history of her life as the reader knows it. He was not surprised, but advised her to wait for a year or two, until the estate could be settled and she could leave the place owing nothing and having nothing, as she desired. That would leave also plenty of time for negotiations to be carried on with the Sisters in Paris, which would be necessary on account of her age. So for another year Clarissa lived in the world, though not of it.

The world takes no account of spiritual things and, while it affects to applaud the hero who gives up his life for his fellow-men, its real friends are the heroes who give up their dollars to its clutches. The world applauds the "smart man" who has plenty of money and enjoys it, and it holds him up to the young as a model and says: "Copy him. He, and those like him, are the successful ones." But it has little or no use for the one who will give *all* he has away during life and become poor for the sake of the poor. Such things are foolish in the eyes of the world. So Clarissa vowed to be no better than a fool to worldly-wise people. Think of it! To give up that grand old house, well and nobly furnished, telling her heart in every corner some story of a mother's and a father's love.

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Samuel died here in this very room, and mother's room has been kept as she left it; and the chair where father sat the night he died remains in its place. The bank account will keep her in funds as long as she may live, without the farm, from which her main support is derived.

"Wa'al," as Si Haynes said, "Miss Clarissy is a-goin' to give up her whole aoutfit and jine the Sisters. I can't see haow folks does sech things. Why, I'd die if I hed to be 'way long from home. Seems to me when the Lord hez provided so well fur anybody ez He hez fur Clarissy, she oughter be contented and not go flyin' in the face of Providence. She can do ez much good stayin' right here ter home ez she can by goin' away."

"Perhaps so for other folks, Si," remarked Mr. Shephard, who overheard him. "But she can't do as much good for herself, and she's got to look out for No. One every time, Si. She's got the right idea of things, Si, though it seems strange. It's what the Lord promises, — ter give a hundred-fold and life everlasting to anyone who will do it. Miss Clarissy Lincoln will get a high place in heaven, Si, — higher than you or me, unless we go up to New Hampshire



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and jine them white-robed monks that Mr. Warren's sister wuz talkin' abaout. Will you go Si?"

Si looked foolish, and a solemn hush came over the assembly as each one was busy with his thoughts that Clarissa had done what none of them had dared to do.

CHAPTER XVIII

Charity

WHEN we were children we well remember the day on which our father set out the young maple trees before the house where we were born. They were guarded and tended carefully and grew into a great and glorious pair (there were two of them) and will continue, let us hope, to cast their dense and graceful shade in summer, delight the eye with their brilliant tints in autumn, and shine like silver in the early sunrise of winter, when the sleet has frozen over their tough but yielding boughs. Quickly they grew, but they are tall, sturdy and strong. For theirs was no unhealthy growth, and it was watched also by one who was solicitous for their welfare. The forces of nature combined with the heat of the sun set them in fine order. For it commanded, and the juices of the winter's fruit were presented to the rootlets far down beneath the soil; and thirsty after their long sleep they drank deep. And then there spread through

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all the trees the current of a new day's life. Buds broke, the red blossoms burst, the two winged seed-pods fell off and the great leaves with their deep indentations and long stems swayed and swung in the cool morning breeze of June over the nest the oriole had hung far out upon a branch. Yes, the tree tells me of my God and Creator. It speaks to me of my Preserver and Upholder. Aye, and if I will but place my ear to listen, I hear it, faintly at first and then more loudly say: "I am risen from death, and so will you rise also." I learn also a lesson of patient waiting for the time of God which He has in His hand. And above all, I see the abundance of His charity in the superabundance of the gifts which He has bestowed upon a tree.

Ye angels, who rejoice over the sinner that does penance, what must be your joy over the one who preserves his innocence?

It is a sad and awful thing for you, O blessed guardian, to see your charge whom God delivered to you at its birth, going to the ways of Core, Judas and Simon Magus. And how sad and solemn must be your face as you see him you love, a baptized soul, plunging into the depths of mortal sin. So once I saw a church

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most fair, one winter's eve, all white and clean with the new fallen snow without.

Within there was the Holy One who cleanses all. But in the night there came the cry of "Fire!" and when the morning dawned the Presence had departed, and the church was gone. Only a heap of ashes lay there to tell where it had stood. Men, women and children came that Sunday morning and loud and deep were the wails and sobs of mourning.

O sinner, how have you, by setting fire to the church of your soul, reduced it to a heap of ashes over which angels mourn?

But Lo, I passed by, — and there upon the ruins, of which every trace had been obliterated by the hands of the charitable workmen, rose the glorious and stately edifice of a new church. So comes the poor, unfortunate soul, — when, our good God alone understands, — and He builds it up again amid the rejoicing of the angels and the triumphant shouts of heaven's whole company. Once again lift the curtain that divides the seen from the unseen, and behold the joy of angels over the innocent. Mary is their queen, those whom Herod slew and the great multitude who have passed away, in the grace which baptism gave them, with a few



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youths like Agnes in Rome, and the little boy in China the other day; to whom must be added those who, like St. Aloysius, fought the world for the gift of innocence and kept it. Yes, Mary is their queen today and their angels rejoice with them.

So far Clarissa had lived a life unharmed by any mortal sin. Her angel is watching faithfully, for he knows the struggle which is sure to come within her, and as he watches he prays. Swift as thought he goes up and back, to and from the presence of God and Clarissa's right hand, and his is great delight, for never yet has he had cause to have his eyes grow dim with weeping at sight of sin within her.

The ruling passion of the life of Clarissa for twenty years had been charity, founded on the love of God, and God Himself had taught it to her. But now, since God had come to dwell in her soul in a new way, by the Sacraments, she had known a new phase of God's love. This new phase was a love of others which forgets all of one's self except one's own immortal soul; a love of the neighbor which forgets the love of one's ease, comfort, pleasure and everything else which the world dotes upon; a love which mounts high in the bracing cold air of purely

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spiritual things. to pass above and over the material within us, for the sake of that which we can find in God.

Clarissa had come to see that God had called her to give up everything for love of Him and those whom He loves: she saw it at first only in shadow but, as one after another of her possessions departed from her, she saw the reality of it and was glad.

There was a fight with nature in the beginning when the first radical changes came, and natural things disappeared until none were left. But she had schooled herself to them as to all changes. Everything in her house was to be put to good use, and thus she was more blessed in the losing of them than had she put them in the fire and parted with them by swift destruction.

"This house and all it contains is for the use of God's poor," she had said. And perhaps sometimes in her far-off home she thought of childish faces gazing with joy at her cabinet, and baby hands playing with her toys; while aged poor prayed for and blessed her who left the comfortable rooms and bed and bedding, in which and on which their lives were so gently closing.

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“Wa’al,” said Mr. Cartwright, “the new home is a-goin’ on, ain’t it?”

“Yes, guess ’tis. Things do go on when Miss Lincoln gets after ’em,” remarked Si Haynes.

“Did you know, Si, thet they say thet Miss Lincoln’s goin’ to give everything for the new home? It’s to be furnished from top to bottom, ’nd they ain’t nothin’ thet’s wanted thet won’t be in it,” said Ira.

“Wa’al, Iry, I can’t say’s I did. But I seen the plans tiday. I’m a-diggin’ at the new sal-lar, ’nd Mr. Mooney, the architect from Boston and Miss Clarissy, they both came daown to see the hole we’re makin’. Mr. Mooney, he hed a big roll under his arm, and he left it on a stone and forgot all abaout it. Wa’al, we jest thought we’d hev a peep at it. When he come back ’nd see us a-lookin’ he jest larfed, ’nd then he sot daown on the stone ’nd told us the hull plan of the Home. It’s goin’ to be a great, long build-in’, more ’n two hundred ’nd fifty feet long, with two big L’s a-runnin’ back from each end of it, ’nd a big chapel in the middle of the back of it too. It’s a-goin’ ter be four stories high, and be het all over with hot water, ’nd they’s goin’ ter be ’lectric light, ’nd everything. They’re a-goin’ ter put up a covered play-

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ground fer the children ter play in, in wet weather, 'nd I d' know what all. 'Nd Mr. Mooney he says 'twill all be done, come next Thanksgiving Day. He expects ter have two hundred men here ter work next week, 'nd so I guess most of us will benefit by the buildin' of it."

"Yes, thet air Mr. Mooney, he's pretty clever, naow, let me tell you. He never got mad nor nothin' when he se'ed us lookin' over his plans," said Luke Hastings.

"Wa'al, what's the use o' gettin' mad?" said Si. "I've got over thet long ago. Father, he useter say say to me sometimes when he sees me a-gettin' riled:

" 'Si, naow remember this: Ba'ars 'nd wolves 'nd otters 'nd dogs, 'nd sometimes hens get mad, cuz they don't know no better 'nd hain't got no reason ter learn them self control. But you're a human bein', 'nd you've got sense, or orte hev, 'nd hevin' it you'd orte control your wrath. Keep it in, Si, 'nd choke it daown, — 'twon't live, then, 'nd 'twill save yer lots of trouble.' So I useter try. It come hard, but I fite hard. I git all riled up inside sometimes, but I hammer the bung inter the barrel all the tighter."

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"Wa'al," said Ira, "mother 'nd me, we was over to see Miss Clarissy night before last. 'Nd we got her ter talkin' baout the Home. Her heart's jest baound up in it 'nd she's like a child with a new toy. She showed us the pictures of the new Home 'nd how 'twould look when 'twas done, 'nd told us haow the Sisters of Charity are comin' ter carry it on. 'Nd mother 'nd me, we most cried ter see her a-goin' so. 'Cause you know, when it's all done she's not goin' ter see any of the good of it."

"Hev you heard what was done day before yesterday?" asked Mr. Warren of the crowd.

"No!" was the reply. "What wuz it?"

"Wa'al, you remember old Mr. put a clause in his will that the Home for the Aged in the old Leeford place should be only for Protestants and not for the Irish. Wa'al, there's old Granny Pierson who's smart, 'nd goes aout 'nd wants to be a Catholic. She's got to live somewhere else if she does, 'nd she's gone 'long with old Mrs. Cramp who's of the same mind, to live with Clarissy Lincoln. They's only three on 'em left naow in the haouse, 'nd I guess the trustees 'll have to put it up for sale."

"Wa'al, it oughter be," said Mr. Dyer. "The

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idea of a man whose grandfather fought against England in the Revolutionary War fer Liberty settin' himself up to dictate to us citizens of this Taown, ter tell us thet half on us, 'nd most all naow, are no good. Why, if I hed harf a hed on me the day it come up in taown meetin' I'd a-spoke against the Town's acceptin' a bequest on any sech crazy man's terms as them be. Why, freedom of religious liberty wuz what the Pilgrim Fathers said they come aout here fer. I guess he wuz descended from the old Puritans of Salem; the Pilgrim Fathers wa'ant so intolerant ez the Puritans. I hope the place 'll be closed up. I'll take all they got there right naow to my own haouse, 'nd keep them 's long ez they live if they want to become Catholics. It's a disgrace to the Taown to hev it as its property. I'm a-goin' to git a clause in the warrant fer next taown meeting 'baout it. Let the trustees run it in private, but don't let it be known as a taown institution for which we are responsible. It ain't respectable."

"Well," said Tom Reilly, "we Irish folks always laughed when the place was spoken of in its young days. It's not old yet. Why, the time will come when there won't be any Protestants to go to the place, because every one in

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taown will be Catholics. What will become of it then? Si, it never troubles us Irish folks. We pity the poor man, who might have done better with his money if he had only known how." Mr. Shephard spoke up then:

"If there is one thing that proves the divinity of the Catholic Church, it is the wonderful charity it hez always shown in the world ter all classes of men, — saying never a word about the Sacraments. When we see haow it wuz by her influence that the curse of slavery has been abolished, beginning as it did from Rome; thet woman hez been put in her proper place, as no mere chattel in the hands of a brute husband; thet the poor hev always been relieved without distinction of race, color or creed; thet the sick, infirm and aged have been cared for until cured or else until death hez relieved them; that the insane hev been treated with gentleness and care; when we consider that all these, prior to Christianity, were neglected and died without help or else were put to death; this charity of the Church is more than human, it is divine.

"But what shall I say of the multitude of men and women who have given up their lives for the love of God and their neighbor? From the

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age of Aquila, Priscilla and Thecla to these times of Mother Seton in our own land; from the time of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome to the days of the Flagets and Heckers of this country, the love of God hez been the one motive thet hez inspired them, and it shows through all their works.

“Take Father Jones, for instance. Who could have loved God more than he? He was born a Protestant, and yet, before he was twenty-one and while a non-Catholic, he kept close to God in every action of his life, looking to Him for guidance, depending on Him for support, and trusting in Him ter lead him into and show him the way of truth that leads ter life. Because he loved God so much, God also loved him greatly and the love of God at last so inflamed his soul thet he became a Catholic. Then see him in his life as a Catholic; in all the trials that he had ter go through, in all the contradictions he endured, in the reverses he met with. When he tried to study, he could not learn; when he would speak to God, He told him to be silent and let Him speak; when he would work hard, God struck him down on a bed of suffering and nailed him to a cross of pain for seventeen years and more. And yet in all, the one thing that

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guided him was Charity, — the love of God. The love of God sent him to Rome; drove him forth with his companions out of his old home; made him found a new order; made him begin the apostolic work which has overturned this Town and brought back to us the old religion of our ancestors which they had lost. There was no love of self in him, for he might have been an Emerson or a Hawthorne, having the talent of both. He might have been a rich man of the world like his brother George who was so dear to him. He was born to organize and command, but he preferred to be under authority, namely the glorious authority of the Son of God on earth, the Catholic Church. So the love of God ruled him, — and see what he has done. Or better, see what God has done by his hands. He gave his life for the conversion of his country; he founded a community whose object is the same; and left men in it imbued with the same ideas that God put in his soul while he was yet a young novice. Certainly the love which inspires such as he is, — and they have been in every age, — is divine; and the Church through which it comes must be the divine channel of grace to men. His was a life thoroughly of our land and time. Father Jones was a baker by trade; and

minister God as the source of all this. A few years led him up to the door of the Catholic Church and introduced him to it. By he entered into a possession of it. He had no idea when he was without. Faith and Charity were so strong in him in his early life that he could not rest until he had the grace of God developed them each into strong and fine growths full of the fruits of His seven gifts; which developed, he calmly fell asleep one bright day afternoon in December not many years ago. In his early life his soul was inundated with the joy that God sometimes gives to his chosen ones. God was ever near him to comfort him in his presence.

"He heard His voice often calling him to sweet and good things to hear. But God had a day to come when he must bear the cross and be forsaken like the Master. It

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still awaits; and on the very eve of it, God left him alone in pain and suffering, desolate and deserted, ter see his face and hear His voice no more until the day when entering heaven he should see Him again forever. In all this awful life of desolation, for all those dreadful years, one and the same thing kept him alive, kept him from going insane, kept him in the grace of God. It was the deeply rooted love of God in his soul. This love goes out ter God, then to all of those whom God loves. Has not God said: 'He that says he loves God and hates his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?' So, although I did not intend ter preach a sermon when I started out, — we see how the Church which teaches Charity like this has prevailed. And the religion that preaches and teaches charity like that practiced at the Home for the Aged hez gone under. The one is not charity at all; it is pure philanthropy, or love of man pure and simple. There is in it no divine motive. We ought to be thankful, and I guess we are, ter Miss Clarissy Lincoln for the true charity with which she has blessed our Town."

CHAPTER XIX

Thanksgiving Day

THANKSGIVING DAY! O, what a host of sacred memories are enshrined in the heart of a New Englander, and enclosed by the doors of that word: *Thanksgriving*.

It brings back the good old Grandmother at whose death we assisted while yet in the bonds of the Protestant Religion; and we hear her asking that some one might pray, a few minutes before her lonely death. O how lonely must be the death of many a one of these poor but good souls who, without priest, Sacraments or prayers, pass into the presence of their Supreme Judge! It recalls the dear Mother, so gentle, kind and good, who presided at her place with such sweetness and grace, intent on every one but herself, to see them happy and well fed on Thanksgiving Day.

Thanksgiving Day! Now there rises up the form of Father, as he stands over the great turkey at which we are looking in patient expectation. We remember the day of all days, the Thanksgiving Day when, amidst the great

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crowd, we, a little boy of six, were forgotten in the serving. To be passed over and forgotten! O, we have not forgotten that. May we be made patient in this world when men pass by and forget us; and remember that there is Thanksgiving Day to come, when no one will be passed over and forgotten.

How true he was to us in life, even when we, in what we thought to be manhood, judged our "experiences of the world" to be greater than his at seventy years of age. How kind and patient he was, though we passed on to be thirty years old before we settled down. How proud he was of our profession, and how he loved to introduce us as, "My youngest boy, a priest." Ah, well do we remember the last Thanksgiving Day, when three generations of children gathered round to celebrate for the last time the unity which there is in a good family. True, some had gone; and some one was to go, and then another, and then Thanksgiving Day for us became a day of memories; a day holy to us wherever we may be, — for it reminds us of holy things: our parents, our brothers and our sisters.

A day of reunion, and, 'mid it all, of joy in the knowledge that of all that God had given

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them "they had not lost one." A day of joy for the young, when visions of citron, raisins and apples, — and the round of beef all chopped and mixed with spices and sugar and wine proclaim the great Mince Pie. The huge pumpkin pie all in brownish gold, and baked in the biggest pan the house afforded, with flakey crust and dark brown top. Then the piles of apple, mince, squash, custard, cranberry, Marlborough and other pies, which crowded the shelves in the larder until they groaned. There were the chicken pies, four great ones, made by mother's hands alone. No bones disfigured them and no teacup in the middle deceived you when they came on the table on Wednesday night for supper. There was the turkey at dinner, or perhaps two of them, and a goose; with onions and Hubbard Squash, potatoes boiled with their skins on and therefore mealy; celery, cauliflower, — and the rich giblet gravy over all. Then the pudding and the pies, "the corner left for the nuts and the raisins," the run about and come back again to "settle things down" of the young folk. Then the drawing back and resting awhile, and the skating or coasting if the weather was propitious; or perhaps a long walk. In the evening came the light supper,

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for who could eat much after such a dinner? And then the tableaux and charades and games until your eyes drooped heavily, and all retired to thank God that the day had passed off so well.

Something like this is the Thanksgiving Day in New England still. May it never be supplanted; and may the old Church take it to herself, as she has the innocent customs of many non-Catholics, and in blessing the day, make it a day all her own.

It was Thanksgiving Day in the Home for the Orphans and the Aged, their first Thanksgiving in the new Home. And O, what a time they had.

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed Mr. Dyer, as the old council met in Warren's store and sat around the fire. "I thought I was two years old again ter see you, Mr. Dan'l Shephard, all dressed up in them clothes of your grandfather's, wig and all, up at the Home the other afternoon. Why it made me feel reel young again. I never knew abaout it until I got there. I'd a-liked to dress up in some old clothes I've got."

"Well, you see, Mr. Dyer, it was all Peggy Crossman's doin'. She come to me and said: 'Mr. Shephard, we young folks are going to dress up in our grandmothers' dresses terday,

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to wait on table at the Home for the Orphans. And I jest run in ter ask you if you had something you could put on, so as ter come with us for our escort.' Wa'al, of course I couldn't say no. But I couldn't go raound the taown inviting the other men-folks ter come with me. That is haow it wuz, Mr. Dyer," said Mr. Shephard.

O, I ain't fussin' 'baout thet. I hed a better time watchin' the capers of the youngsters, jest as I was, in my ordinary clothes, then if I was dressed up 'nd hed to act a part. There was my Turkey, with an American Flag on each leg, 'nd I see Mis' Allard over at it with a carving knife ez big ez an ice-saw, 'nd a lot of boys a-lookin' at her, 'nd nearly chokin' with larfter. They didn't know her from the man in the moon, though she'd taught them in school for nigh a year. She hed her hair all powdered 'til it was most white, 'nd her face was all painted up, 'nd she hed a big patch of black on one side to make a contrast as they useter do. Then she hed a pair of spectacles. 'Nd her dress, wa'al, 'twould take a woman, 'nd praps two or three on 'em, to describe thet. But when old Mrs. Cartwright come in with a dress over a big hoop-skirt, the children they just went crazy.

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'Nd the Sisters, they larfed and larfed. 'Nd as fer me, my sides ain't well yet. Wa'al, they settled daown 'nd et their dinner, cuz old clothes can't claim attention from children when there's turkey a-goin'. They hed a fine dinner, so one little boy told me. He said he hed five helps to turkey, six pieces of pie of all kinds, 'nd bananas 'nd nuts 'nd cake, 'nd didn't know how many glasses of water he drank. I asked Sister Dollars (Dolores) if she didn't expect some of them to be sick before mornin'. She said: 'No. St. Joseph always looks after them.'

" 'Wa'al', says I, 'beggin' his pardon, but he's got a big contract.' Then she larfed 'nd so did I. But I asked St. Joseph ter look after 'em all that night, before I went ter bed."

" 'Wa'al,'" said Ira Cartwright, "I was over ter the old Lincoln Mansion with Si Haynes, kinder helpin' raound with the old folks, 'nd it made me reel homesick. They hain't changed much of anything in the haouse sense Miss Clarissy left a year ago, 'nd they're usin' up her things jest ez common 's ef they wuz brought up right in this here store. I know it's all right, becuz she said it wuz ter be, 'nd what she said hed ter go. The table wuz set aout in all the best things of chiny 'nd glass they hed. And

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those old people enjoyed it. Why, I sot at one end of the table to a turkey, 'nd Si, he was at the other end to a goose. I asked old Mis' Spencer if she'd hev turkey, 'nd she says:

“ ‘Why, Iry Cartwright, what a question on Thanksgiving Day! Of course I'll have a piece of both!’ Wa'al, then the joke hed ter be explained to every one, so's they all could enjoy it who couldn't hear it. 'Nd we see all the folks in their old dresses, for they come over to show themselves. So we hed a pretty good time of it, after all.”

So, as they are celebrating their Thanksgiving Day, and as each heart of the Sisters of Charity, of the townspeople, the Aged in the Old Home, and the happy children sends a message of soul across the sea, — let us follow the Singing Angel who takes it and deposits it in the soul of her who was known as Clarissa Lincoln; but who, after to-day, will be known to every one in the world as Sister Dorothy. For she is a “Gift of God” to earth and heaven.

Away over in Paris about this time, there is another day of thanksgiving. A novice, not in years nor in experience of the world; nor yet in the things of God, — is kneeling in her white veil, her candle in her hand, to take her vows.



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It is also the blessing of an ancient vow of her own; it is the fulfilment of her mother's vow as well, — old, and yet new. While she kneels there, waiting for the moment to come, let us review with her the year just passed. She had waited to see the last finishing-touch put to the new Home, but she denied herself the happiness of seeing the children enter there. She kept not so much as her car-fare to Boston, when she went to the house of the Little Sisters of the Poor, before the Sisters of Charity came to their new institution. Then after a few weeks they sent her to Paris as a Postulant. Her Novitiate began; and she, who was born commander, organizer and general-in-chief has now to sit and learn all over again a hundred things she thought she knew.

“They do things differently in Paris from what they do where you came from,” would say the Mistress of Novices. But Clarissa had learned obedience in the school of a mother's love and found it easy to practice. Many a time had she been taught, as she had often in her life before, to endure contradiction and suffer with patience, saying nothing; following the injunction of the Apostle:

“If you do well and suffer for it, this is ac-

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ceptable with God." But she said: "I do so ill that I ought to suffer. And my sufferings do not amount to anything when they are all borne, and I am always looking forward to the end of them."

Peggy Crossman had written to her while she was in her Novitiate, and the Novice Mistress had deemed it not unwise to hand her the letter after reading it. It was written in Peggy's own hand and in French, though not the French of Lamartine or Bossuet. Here it is:

Emmitsburg, Maryland,
July 16, 190—.

My Dear Sister:

You will see from the superscription that I am here. But you will rejoice to know that I am in the Novitiate. I write to encourage you; not that you need it at all, but because the little story I am going to tell you may — and I have no doubt it will — increase within your soul the desire already planted there to be united to our Lord in His Passion.

You may remember my telling you once of a lady who was a member of the Protestant Sisterhood in Boston and who became a Catholic late in life, after a long number of years spent in the United States and England. Well, after being received into the Church she came home to America and settled down to live with her son. It was not long before she was seized with an incurable disease of the spine, and she has been

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confined to her room and her chair ever since. She suffers the most excruciating pains and cannot now raise her eyes from the floor to see who is in the room. I saw her a week before I came here and had to sit on a low stool at her feet to allow her to look at me. She is helpless, and yet I never saw such an example of patience and loving obedience and resignation to the will of God as her's. This is her reward for being true and faithful to God and for following His leading. It is seldom that such a reward is given to any one here on earth, and I know that you will contemplate this poor, suffering lady sometimes, who cannot read a book, who can just manage to hold a rosary in her fingers. You will, I say, think of her, and be inspired to suffer gladly all that may come to you in the high vocation you have chosen. I could write you pages about our native town and things there; I will only say one thing. The grace of God has, in the months since you went away, brought into the Church all the Episcopalians left in the town. And Mr. Moffet the Rector is going to Rome to study for the Priesthood. If he calls on you in Paris, he will tell you about it. Little Peter Cartwright and Tommy Reilly are going away to St. Charles' College in September. Truly the desert has bloomed as the rose.

That we may be pure, white roses, fit one day to be transplanted into the Garden of Paradise, I ask you to join me in begging from Mary's prayers to her divine Son.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
Sister Paula (Crossman),
late Peggy.

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"Without suffering we can gain nothing that is good," the Novice Mistress used to be always saying to her Novices, and Clarissa had her share. First, she had the two or three months in which she had to learn to speak the language, and it was for a while quite like a purgatory for her. But this once acquired, she went on rapidly, and became as well trained in the science of the Saints as she had been in the science of the world. The Novice Mistress put her under obedience to write out a full account of her life, from the earliest times she could remember, and this to Clarissa was a daily and a constant mortification. The good deeds had to be recounted, and she knew how they had been spoiled by unworthy motives, and talking over them as if they were satisfactory and could not be improved upon. She saw where pride and self-interest had come in to ruin, as she thought, many, if not all of her deeds of charity, and it was hard to record them, though obedience made it easier after a short time.

To say that the Sisters were surprised when they found out what they had in the shape of this Yankee old maid for a Novice, would not express it at all. But Clarissa went on and never knew that anyone held her in any estima-

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tion. Indeed, she would not have been surprised had they dismissed her as having no vocation before the end of her Novitiate.

So she advanced daily in humility and in favor with God and her superiors. There is a band of angels in that chapel of the Mother House of the Little Sisters of the Poor this morning, and they are many. They have come to Clarissa to help celebrate the Feast with her guardian. We have met them before, at least some of them; but there is one throng of two hundred who are the angels of the Home and its inmates in the little town away off in America. They have a particular reason to be grateful to her, for she has helped them by the work she left behind her.

This morning, as she kneels before the bishop who holds our Lord in his hands and repeats the formula of her final vows, she seems to see heaven opened, and God looks down upon her soul and smiles. Mary glances graciously at her, and then she seems to see a great company rejoicing; among whom she thinks she can discern her parents and sisters and brothers, with old Mrs. Egan and a hundred others who seem to be present there with our Lord in her soul, on this day of happiness. Mass is over, and all,

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visible and invisible, join in the Te Deum as she kneels in her place to finish her thanksgiving.

And here let us leave her today; here at the foot of the cross, where alone she can find the strength that will enable her to go through the life of hardship that our Lord has laid down for her.

His word to her was: "You have done extraordinary things long enough, — now you must simply do your ordinary work well. I shall call upon you no more for extraordinary performances." She will be content with a long, monotonous life, for such hers is to be, until she makes one last extraordinary move and passes away to the reward which is given to those who practice heroic charity in both ordinary and extraordinary ways.

CHAPTER XX

Ten Years After

HAVE you ever been in Naples? Well, then you remember the curious old churches, the Chiaia and its lovely view across the bay; the smoking old mountain that for nineteen centuries has been a menace to the city and a reminder to thousands of another fire that shall not be quenched. How blue the sky was one fine day in January when James Crossman, the youngest of the family, now a grown man, was coming with his wife and children to cross the bay and visit the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum and see the city of Sorento.

The steamer was lying out in the stream, and a great party who had come down to Naples from Rome by train were going out to the little craft which plies from Naples to Sorento. They were a gay crowd of tourists, the majority non-Catholics, though not of a bigoted or narrow-minded sort. Three row-boats filled with passengers were looked upon with satisfaction by the captain, who was collecting the fares, as

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they left their precious freight to climb up on board the gang-plank.

One of the young Crossman boys, a sharp-eyed lad whom nothing escaped, called out to his father:

"Father, please come here a moment." Mr. Crossman turned, and the child pointed silently to a boat which was being rowed rapidly to the steamer.

"Well, Peter," he said, "why do you call my attention to that boat?"

"It made me think of Aunty, Father. There are two Sisters in it," said he.

"So there are. I wonder who they can be?" He was not long in doubt, as he knew well the habit of the Little Sisters of the Poor. There were two of them; one dark and swarthy as a Moor from Spain, and small of stature. The other tall and commanding, with a pair of steel-bowed spectacles behind which beamed a pair of dark blue eyes as deep in color as the sky above.

They began to go about among the passengers distributing their circulars, which told simply of their work among the aged poor.

Peter was wild with enthusiasm and said to his father:

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"May I beg for them?"

"Yes, if you wish, — though I would have done it," answered Mr. Crossman. "Here is five lire for a starter." So Peter ran off and began to talk to one of them, the tall one. She started a little, and then said something in Italian to her companion. Then she said in English, with an accent familiar to Peter:

"Well, my dear, what is it?"

"What! Do you speak English?"

"Yes," she said, smiling.

"Why, that's fine. Well, my father, and all of us in the family, too, are Catholics, and he said I could beg for you here. Will you let me? See what he gave me for a starter, and I will give you five more. Let me, please, I know every one on board the boat, and they won't refuse me." The Sister, amused, turned to her companion and told her what the child had said. Then they both sat down, and Peter began his quest. Every one had heard of the good work the Sisters were doing in Boston. And when they found out that these were the same Sisters in Naples and that one of them spoke English; and when Peter told them slyly that he was sure one of them was an American, they filled the child's hat with the greasy Italian money, and

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his heart was delighted with their generosity. At last he came quietly back to the two Sisters and counted it all out, to the amount of two hundred fifty-six francs or lire — fifty-one dollars.

"Now, Sister," he said, "here it is. I am an American boy from -----, Massachusetts, and my Aunt Peggy is a Sister of Charity down in Mobile. Ain't you an American, too? You talk like one, anyway."

"Yes," she said, "I was born in America."

"I knew it, Father," he cried. "Please come here again for a moment. Here is a Sister of the Poor who was born in America. This is my father, Mr. Crossman."

"I do not think," said Mr. Crossman, "that we need any introduction, Sister. We used to be well known to each other years ago. So they sent you here? Well, I am glad to see you looking so well and happy. I have much to tell you, if I may be allowed to call at the convent some day, only of things which will be good for you to know. Your little friend Peggy will be delighted to know that we met you here and that her nephew begged for you. For your secrets, I will keep them. No one but us here shall know them, and they shall go no farther in Na-

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ples. My brother Frank is in Rome and is coming here in a few days. Perhaps he could say Mass in your convent?"

"Mr. Crossman, I am pleased to see you and your family. I may be allowed to see you next Tuesday when I am home. Do bring Father Crossman, and we will give him a chance to say Mass for us every day while he is here. Are there many converts in the old Town?"

"Yes. It is practically a Catholic Town, and the Selectmen are Catholics. One of the Cartwright boys and Tom Reilly's son are to be ordained this Christmas. The work of conversion in your native land, Sister, is going on rapidly. Well, Good-bye for a few days," said he, — and Sister Dorothy departed, with her heart full of gratitude to those who "had helped her poor old people."

She and her companion went immediately home and were received with joy by the whole community when the result of their morning's work became known. The next Tuesday was the Feast of the Purification, and Father Frank, with his brother and family, was at the convent door bright and early for the Mass. The good Mother Superior made a little "Feast" for Sister Dorothy, and all had breakfast together

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after receiving Holy Communion from Father Frank. Then the house had to be visited and all sorts of questions had to be answered. Sister Dorothy never said a word about the Orphan's Home, and the children had been cautioned not to mention it. So it was about Si Haynes and Luke Hastings and all the rest of the characters that Sister Dorothy asked. She noted the dead, to remember to pray for them.

"Mrs. Cartwright has gone to her long home, Sister, and her husband lives with his daughter Fanny. We gave her a great funeral. Everyone was at it, and the priest went before the body to the grave-yard in his cope, as he would in a Catholic land. She died full of good works and was the means, in her old-fashioned way, of helping many a one into the Church. Mrs. Goodhue is living and, although she is eighty, is well and hearty. You may not be surprised to know that Mr. Shephard is dead. While his death was a public calamity, we know that he is doing as much and more for us now, than he ever could. Mr. Dyer, too, is gone, and with him the last of the old-fashioned Yankees. So 'Iry' Cartwright is president of the Council in Warren's store. Young John Warren and James Reilly have it together now, and if you were to

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come in some evening to purchase a couple of mackerel, you would find them as salt as they were thirty years ago, and the council just as wise as of yore. Mr. and Mrs. Egan came as far as Ireland with me, to visit the old place; and his sister is a member of your Community somewhere, — I do not know where, of course. But I would not be surprised if Providence threw you together some day, for the sake of her mother, to whom we all owe so much.”

Mrs. Crossman said:

“Sister, I am sure you remember Mr. Bland, the Unitarian minister?”

“O, yes. Why, he once met me on the street and wanted to prove to me that St. Peter was never in Rome. He appeared to be fair on the outside, but it seemed that he had no love for the Church. Has he come in, too?” asked she.

“Yes, and in a curious sort of way. You remember Abner Crump, who used to go around killing and butchering pigs?” she laughed.

“O yes, of course. He was baptized just before I left. I helped instruct him, for he could neither read nor write. It took me a week to get the Our Father and the Hail Mary into his head. Yes, I have reason to remember his long,



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shambling gait as he came swinging up the path to the house and saying:

“ ‘Wa’al, Miss Clarissy, it’s gettin’ cold. Don’t you think it’s abaout time fer these horgs o’ yourn to be put to death? I’m all ready to tend to ’em whenever you be. Shall I come up termorrer or next day? Yer see, I got to go to Old Taown next day arfter, ’nd arfter that I’ll be as busy as a bee in June.’ And he would run on in this way, if you would let him, for half an hour. Well, I am talking too much, I guess, myself. Tell me about Abner and Mr. Bland.”

“Mr. Bland lived in the Town for several years after his church was closed. He had a little land and cultivated it, and we all helped him along, for we felt sorry for him. At last he came into the store one night and sat listening to the council, who were talking about the priests in the Philippines. He said to them, after a while, that he had made up his mind to study the Catholic Religion all over again and compare it with the Bible, and if he found that the two tallied he would become a Catholic. For he said: ‘I feel like a lone crow with whom the rest will not associate.’ So he set to work and he was reading and studying day after day for a couple of months. One day he met Abner

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slouching along with his quid of tobacco in his cheek and looking at nothing.

“ ‘How do you do, Abner’ he said.

“ ‘Wa’al, ’s thet you, Parson Bland? How de do?’ answered he.

“ ‘Abner, I’m studying the Catholic Religion now, ’nd if you can answer me a question that I don’t understand, I’ll be a Catholic,’ said Mr. Bland.

“ ‘Wa’al, Parson’ said he, ‘I don’t know much, ’xcept what I hear, ’nd I hain’t got a fust-rate mem’ry neither. Miss Clarissy Lincoln, she give me all the Cath’lic larnin’ I got. I can say my beads, ’nd I know how to go to Confession ’nd Holy Communion, ’nd thet’s all. You better go to Father McSorely. He’s the one for a gentleman like you.’

“ ‘No, Abner, I’m going to ask you to answer the question. It is not a hard one for you, but it is for me,’ said Mr. Bland. Abner was trembling all over by this time, and so Mr. Bland went on:

“ ‘Now, Abner, in the Bible it says about the Holy Communion: *Except Ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and Drink His Blood, Ye shall not have life in you.* Now, in your church you receive only the body of Christ when you go to



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Holy Communion. The priest alone receives the blood of Christ. Now, is not the practice of your church contrary to the Scripture?’

“ ‘O’, said Abner, much relieved. ‘Mr. Bland, what kind of a body would it be, if there was no blood in it?’ So old Abner brought the grace of conversion to Mr. Bland, and he was baptized a couple of weeks later.”

They spent a pleasant morning there in Naples and Clarissa’s heart was gay recalling the old men and women of her native place, whom she has always remembered in her prayers. But of the great charity she had founded, of the fortune she had left, never a word was said. And her friends, they knew that when we have given up all, it is better not even to glance back at what we have given up, — and so they, too, were silent.

Sometimes, away over there in Italy, the Yankee Sister feels in her heart a peace and joy not of earth. She knows it comes from the Prince of Peace, but no wonder she knows. And in the chapel of the Orphan’s Home there is celebrated a Mass every week for the Foundress, Clarissa Lincoln. And it will be celebrated after she has gone hence to join the choir of Virgins by Mary’s side in heaven.

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Ten years had made a great change in the little Town, those first ten years of the twentieth century. There was no church open except the Catholic Church, and there was now almost completed a large stone structure to take the place of the old wooden one, which in its turn had grown too small for the Catholic population. There was, besides, the church in the North Village, where Mass was said every Sunday and First Friday. Schools were in the most excellent condition and the High School, under the charge of four good Catholic laymen, was the pride of the Town.

It was early in the summer of 1910 that two priests of the Apostolic Missionary Band came to preach to Novena to the Holy Ghost which Pope Leo had commanded to be preached in churches some thirteen or fourteen years before.

This band of Apostolic Missionaries had increased in the diocese until they numbered fourteen, and they had been constantly engaged giving missions to Catholics and non-Catholics, in almost every parish in the diocese.

In 1910 there were only about two hundred non-Catholics known in the town, and they were people who steadily and constantly refused to go to any church or listen to any lecture on re-



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ligion. Almost all of them were Masons and they hung on to their Society more perhaps because the Church condemns it than for any real love of it. They had to sell the hall where they once practiced their secret rites, and the Knights of Columbus had purchased it and were in a flourishing condition. In was not any particular hatred of the Catholic Religion that these people had, but rather an indifferent spirit towards it.

“I’ve got along in the world without the Roman Catholic Religion now for sixty years, and I do not see any reason why I should change. I don’t suppose you mean to say I’d get along better if I was a Catholic, do you?” It was Mr. Springer who was speaking to Mr. Crossman.

“Not only do I think you would get along better, but I am sure you would be a happier man. Now, sometimes, when the thought of death comes over you, you hate to think of it. You try to put it way, and you can’t. Then you sigh and say to yourself: ‘Ah, if I only knew what was coming after death; what is going to become of me? What is to be the state of my soul?’ These thoughts rise up and trouble a



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man of seventy, do they not, Mr. Springer," asked Mr. Crossman.

"Well, Mr. Crossman, you are right. Such things do trouble me, and I am not perfectly happy with them for my company. But, how does your Church answer them? The other churches never give us any rational answer to them. Does your Church pretend to do so?" asked the old man.

"Mr. Springer, it was the inability of the old church I formerly belonged to, to answer these questions that led me to investigate the claims of the Catholic Church. And I found in her teachings a doctrine about the future life in all its details necessary for us to know, so reasonable and easy of understanding that it alone would have made me sure of the truth of the Church that taught it. Now, Mr. Springer, I came to ask you if you would come to our church tonight and hear one of our priests. It so happens that he is going to preach on this very subject: *What Happens to the Soul after Death?*"

"Well, I'll go. But you must not expect to make a Catholic out of a good Mason like me."

"So he went. And the prayers and Masses and Benedictions; with almsdeeds, mortifica-



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tions and good works, sent the words to his heart. It was the end for that Town, and the result of the Novena was the same as it was in all the land that year, — a vast harvest of souls.

CHAPTER XXI

Retrospect, and a Glance Forward

I LOOK back over the life of Clarissa as I come to leave her with you. And the thing which has come to me as I have written down these meditations on a few of the incidents of her life is this: She was true to the teaching of her mother, taken from the Bible.

“Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man.” From childhood, having a good father and mother whose love was not merely for the welfare of her body but principally for the care of her undying soul, she had walked in a straight path of obedience, made sweet by reasonable commands whose reason was as fully explained as could be to her young mind. It was not, however, allowed her to question the wisdom of any command, but she was led to see the wisdom of each one as it was given her. Thus tyranny and all arbitrary dealing was far from her, and she combined true independence of spirit and individuality of soul with obedience and submission to properly constituted authority, which gave her no trou-



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ble in after life when God called her to become a Catholic. Neither did she try to rise to a higher life in the supernatural order by pretending, as some have done, to despise everything in the natural order. She made the natural within her the stepping stones, the stairs or rounds of the ladder, to rise to a supernatural state, and took all that was natural within her up to that state which she was seeking to arrive at. The consequence of this was that her natural powers never held her back, and she could be alone with God wherever she was. She needed not to run to the chapel or to look up to a crucifix or some statue or picture. For as she had endeavored to live in God's presence all the time for nearly twenty years as a non-Catholic, she had learned the method of emptying the soul of all but God. And when she came to receive God in the Sacraments, she never let Him go; and He remained there with her, sanctifying her natural virtues and powers and steadily increasing her supernatural virtues until she was far advanced on the road to perfection. There was never anything of all this on the surface with Clarissa. She never knew the joys of sensible devotion, of which people speak. She was always glad to assist at Mass and could

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have been present a whole morning at Mass after it was over.

But this came from her faith.

"I know that every prayer is precious in the sight of God. Therefore I offer Him as many as I can. I know, because the Church tells me so, that God wants me to be in His presence all the time. So I try to be. But I have no feeling about it. I do not feel like sighing or shedding tears, nor am I ever abstracted out of myself. I simply think of God, and I am at rest and quiet at once. If anyone else comes to my thoughts at such moments, I think of them as beside me in God's presence for a space, and then I am alone again with him."

This state of soul at which she aimed and in which she continued for many years was but the supernatural completion of the natural longing of the soul within her after God. We have seen how it was begun by good training, religious training and piety, by word and deed in the person of father and mother. There was the daily offering of the day, when she first arose, to God, with all the thoughts and words and deeds. There was the Christian maxim: "Pay attention to your own faults, and let others look out for their own," and this helped



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her in many a difficulty which would have proved a pitfall for one not careful of herself. On the other hand, she was taught to respect the rights of all others with whom she came in contact and so, as we have seen, made for herself a host of friends and advocates in this world and in the world to come.

Then, there were the prayers of the poor on earth, in Purgatory and in Heaven; the five Masses for Mrs. Egan's soul given by Clarissa, not knowing what she was doing but inspired by her guardian: the prayers of the saints and of their Queen, with Masses and Benedictions of the Blessed Sacrament. These were the means by which grace came.

Let us take ourselves once more, for the last time, to the old grocery store tonight. It will be torn down in the spring to make way for a new brick building of more modern style and type, and who can tell if the old council will ever meet again?

The old faces are gone, — many of them. But as of old the children of the village, some of them, are hanging round to pick up a story or laugh at some wit that nightly falls from the lips of some old-timer in that honorable council.

Abner Crump has been a member of that

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council for years, but rather a silent one. His remarks were few, but when they came, they hit home. Of late he had become more talkative, for now there was less ridicule and banter and more charity and forbearance. Abner Crump was tall — six feet three — and very spare, with sunken cheeks and a nose like a hawk's bill. He had been forced to work from childhood and had never attended school, but he had all the native wisdom and wit of a sound mind and a training by his poor, but respectable parents, which might be a model for some who boast of their culture.

The conversation this evening was upon Clarissa Lincoln and dwelt largely in reminiscences of the past years. Luke Hastings was retailing many interesting things, and among other things spoke of the famous Fourth of July speech of Mr. Lincoln.

"I remember my father saying after it was over: 'That speech makes a date in the history of this town.' And so it did. No wonder Clarissy Lincoln became a Catholic with such a training as that."

"I see Mr. James Crossman today," said Abner, "'nd he wuz a-tellin' me thet he wuz daown in Italy ter some aoutlandish place, there he



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seen Clarissy Lincoln a-beggin' fer the poor. 'Nd little Peter, he passed round the hat, 'nd they got a whole sight o' money. Mr. Crossman, he wouldn't a known her, 'xcept fer young Peter, who heard her a-talkin' English jest the same ez we do here, 'nd he asked her if she wa'ant an American. Then 'twa'ant long afore he told her who he wuz and who she wuz, and a few days after they had a regular holiday over it."

"Well, it was wonderful," said Joe Adams, "how Miss Lincoln did. I have never done wondering at it."

"Wa'al, 'tis wonderful, 'nd 'tain't wonderful," said Abner. "Naow, Mr. Adams, you 'nd me be pretty fair wort of Cath'lics. Wa'al, then, we hadn't oughter wonder to see the grace of God comin' daown on a woman like Clarissy Lincoln. She's jest the right kind fer grace to come to. Soon 's you see a milk can, you know what it's fer; 'nd soon 's you take a good look at Miss Lincoln, you know what she's fer: the can's fer milk, — 'nd she's fer grace. If ever I see a tender-hearted little critter, 'twas her when she wa'ant more 'n four. She'd run away off to the walnut grove becuz "they wuz a-goin' ter kill the pretty pigs." That showed

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her heart, 'nd she's hed a good heart all her life."

"Yes," remarked a big boy by the name of Egan, "if it hadn't been for her, my grandmother would have died without the priest."

"Wa'al," continued Abner, "Mr. Lincoln, he always done what old Yankees done. He hed prayers in the haouse every day. Why, I useter go there long in November to kill their horgs, 'nd after breakfast he'd set back a-ways from the table, 'nd we'd hev prayers afore we got to our day's work. Wy, he'd pray for me. He'd say: 'O Lord, help this here man who's come to take the life of Thy critters. Let him do it 'thout cruelty,' 'nd more like thet. Tell you, he hed a way o' prayin' thet kinder sot you right up. So, if we look at it in this way, 'tain't a bit wonderful, — 'tis jest what we might 'xpect. I guess if I'd been brought up 'thout no prayin' no church-goin' nor nothin', I'd a-ben hangin' aout by the heels a-coolin' still, like one of the hogs I killed today, a-waitin' fer someone ter come 'nd carry me inter the Church. Then the Lincolns wa'ant a bit stuck up. They hed me to the table with them all the time I wuz a-killin' 'nd a-butcherin' to their place. 'Nd all the rest of the help sot daown

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'nd ez with 'em too, 'nd they 'I ask a 'nessin' afore we begin. You never see sich order ez there wuz round that place. They wa'nt no trouble to find things, 'nd things wuz ez clean 'nd neat ez they could be. He never let nothin' go to waste. Every bit of them hogs he hed killed wuz used up. I said to him one day:

"Mr. Lincoln, now is it you're so awful careful of everything you've got?" 'Nd he says to me:

"'Abner, they's one thing in the Bible that goes all through it, 'nd that is, that we hev to give an account of the talents we hev in this world. Now, Abner, I don't look on this here farm, nor my stock, nor my haouse, — no, nor my family, ez anything but jest some talents the Lord hev give to me to trade with till He comes after me for my account. They're all His, Abner, 'nd if that ain't the Gospel, I don't know what is.'

"'Wa'al,' sez I, 'I guess you're abaout right, Mr. Lincoln,' 'nd he wuz, too."

"What a pity he didn't turn Catholic," said James Cartwright.

"'Wa'al, I guess he's all right or will be, said Abner sententiously. "The Lord must a met him when he died, an' given him a big lift

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towards heaven. That's what I believe about folks like him. Naow I'll tell you more 'baout wy it ain't so wonderful 'baout Miss Clarissy. She couldn't help bein' good, cuz her parents wuz good. They wa'ant thet kind of folks thet hain't got no use fer folks becuz they're poor or homely or unfortunate. They wuz jest the folks Mr. Lincoln he wuz after. He didn't make no difference who he helped, fer he said we wuz all God's people. I can remember way back, when the fust Irish folks came to Taown, 'nd lots o' people wuz daown on 'em; wa'al, he jest stood up fer 'em; 'nd he wuz tel-lin' 'baout the famine in Ireland in 1847, — haow 'twas a famine got up by politics, 'nd it hadn't oughter ben. 'Nd he'd the same respect fer these Irish ez he hed fer his old grandfather who fought all through the Revolution in 1776. No wonder Clarissy got the grace of God; — she'd oughter. 'Twould be wonderful if she didn't."

"Well, then," said Joe Adams, "where does the wonderful part come in, Abner?"

"Wa'al, I'll tell yer. 'T seems ter me thet the reasons why she got the grace of God ain't so wonderful ez the way she come ter get it. I asked her jest a few weeks afore she went away



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how she come to turn Catholic. Cuz, yer see, I was cur'us ter know, ez she hed gi'n me my instructions, 'nd I guess I give her some trouble, too. So I sez: 'Miss Clarissy, how'd it happen thet you become a Catholic?'

" 'Wa'al, Abner,' said she, 'my father said to me once, when you see anyone unjustly treated, and pounced upon, try and help them, and see what right and justice they have on their side. Wa'al, Abner,' said she, 'when Mr. Hawkins preached that sermon, I med up my mind to see what right and justice the Cath'lic Church hed on its side. 'Nd I found thet it hed the whole of it.' Thet's all there is to it. Naow, isn't it wonderful ter think thet Mr. Hawkins, by a awful sermon, wuz the means o' turnin' Clarissy Lincoln inter the Cath'lic Church? 'T any rate, thet's the way it seems ter me.'"

"Well, Abner, you're right, I guess, and we are all much obliged to you," said Joe Adams.

"Wa'al, I kinder hed ter crawl over here to-night. Don't know ez I'll ever git here again. I'm ninety naow, 'nd I got the rheumatiz' a-kil-lin' yistiddy. But when I'm gone, don't any o' you fergit me, will yer?'"

"No, Abner, we'll look out for you then, sure," was the general cry of all present. Tom



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Reilly and Joe helped the old man home that evening, and then the council broke up, to meet no more until they shall all be gathered in another Store House, to talk over and rejoice over old times and God's graces and mercies forever.

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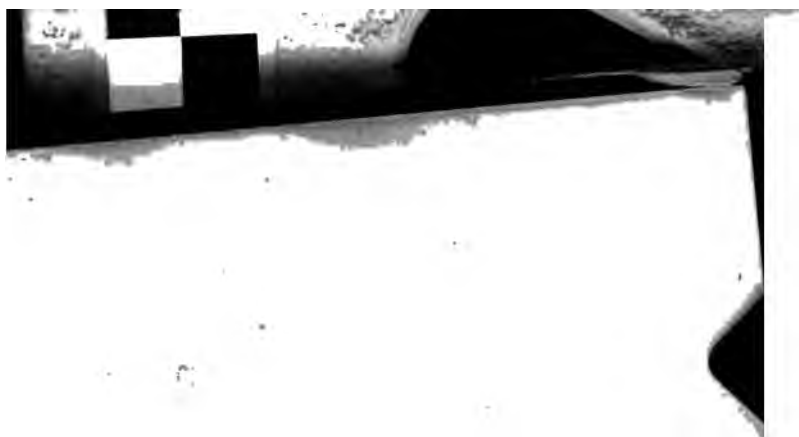
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